

TORCH-BEARERS



OF HISTORY

















TORCH-BEARERS OF HISTORY



# TORCH-BEARERS

OF

# HISTORY

A Connected Series of Historical Sketches

*VOL. I.—FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES  
TO THE REFORMATION*

BY

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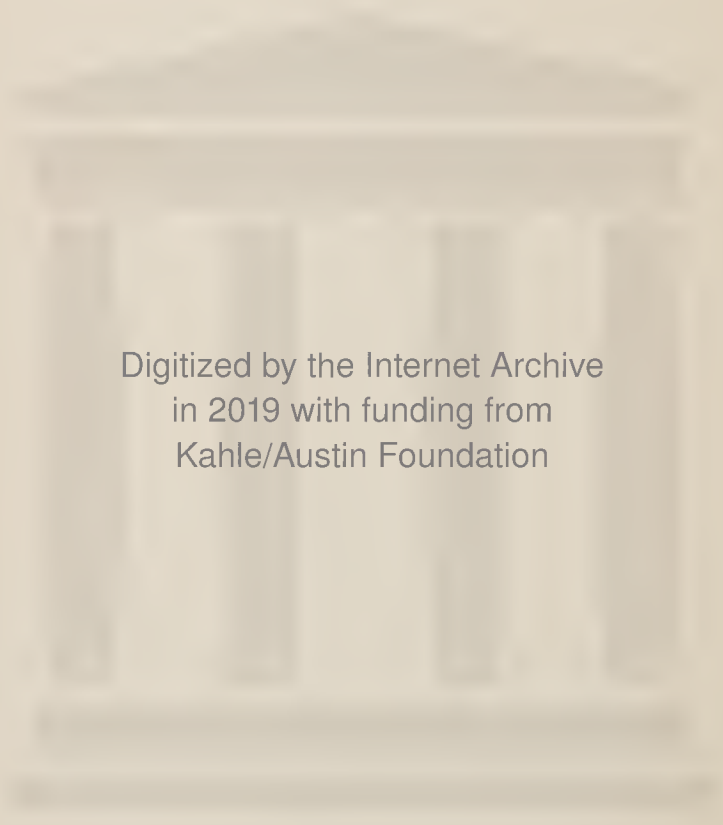
HOMER

T. NELSON AND SONS

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1900



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## P R E F A C E.

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THE object of the following series of historical sketches is to give young readers some idea of the way in which the torch of history has been handed on in Europe from age to age and from nation to nation, beginning in ancient Greece, and coming down to modern Germany, where, with Luther, modern history may be said to begin. With this object, the writer has selected out of each of the great epochs some representative man or woman whose life was capable of forming an interesting story, taking care to *connect* the different sketches as far as was possible without introducing too much detail.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to say that the series does not profess to include *all* the "torch-bearers" of the long period which it covers; but it was thought better to omit some, who would necessarily have been included in a *complete* series, rather than to run the risk of confusing or wearying the young readers for whom the book is intended.

In the present edition, historical maps have been added at the end.

A. H. S.

EDINBURGH, *December 1893.*



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# TORCH-BEARERS OF HISTORY.

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## PART I.

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*FROM PREHISTORIC TIMES TO THE FALL OF THE  
ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE WEST.*

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### CHAPTER I.

HOMER—THE MYTHICAL PERIOD.

IF you look at your map of Europe, you will see that in the south it ends in three peninsulas. The most easterly of the three, or rather the southern part of it, is the country called Greece, and here it is that the history of Europe begins.

The people of ancient Greece were perhaps the most wonderful people that ever lived. They lived in a beautiful country, where the sun was brighter, the sky bluer, and the air clearer than we ever see them here. They loved beauty and all things beautiful; and they sought to put the beauty that they saw around them—the beauty of the mountain-peaks that pointed to the sky, the beauty of the gently curved hill-slopes, of the spring that leapt sparkling from the earth, of the blue sea that stretched away, away, dotted with islets, and broke in a long white

The ancient  
Greeks.

streak of foam, like a happy laugh, on the rocky shore—they sought to put all that into everything they did, into the temples they built, the statues they carved, the poems they wrote, and the songs they sang. And they succeeded so far as it was possible to succeed. There are no nobler buildings in the world to-day than those which the old Greeks built two thousand three hundred years ago; no finer statues than those of Greece have ever been carved, and no grander poems than theirs have ever been written.

Greek history begins with what is called the “Mythical Period,” which just means that part of the history of Greece which is so far back in the past, and has got so much mixed up with tales of the wonderful deeds of the heroes who lived, or were supposed to live, at the time, that it is not easy to tell how much of it is true, and how much of it was invented by poets who lived long afterwards. The best known and the most inter-

esting of all the stories of the Mythical Period is the story of the Trojan war, which is supposed to have taken place in the twelfth century B.C., and which is the subject of the *Iliad*, the great poem of the first and greatest poet of Greece—Homer.

Now, though Homer’s poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, are still in existence to-day, nearly three thousand years after they were composed, and are being read by hundreds of scholars in different countries of the world, we know nothing about the poet himself, except that he seems to have lived in the tenth century B.C. We do not even know where he was born—whether in Greece itself, or in one of the Greek islands, or on the coast of Asia Minor, where the Greeks had colonies. Seven towns laid claim to being the birth-place of the great poet, but none of them proved

its claim. And now some scholars want to make out that no single poet ever wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—that these poems are the work of several different poets, and that Homer never lived at all. But we will not believe that. We will believe that Homer lived, probably in Asia Minor—it does not matter exactly where—a simple, childlike man, as all great men are, with a simple, childlike worship for noble deeds and feats of arms, and a great love of Greece and everything Greek in his heart, who was far from thinking that the tales he told of the Greeks at Troy would be read by people in lands as yet unknown, long after the language in which they were written had ceased to be spoken.

Homer's poem the *Iliad* contains, as I have told you, the story of the Trojan war, and is named from Troy, or Ilium, a town in Asia Minor. More than eleven hundred years before Christ was born there The "Iliad." lived in Troy a king called Priam; and he had many sons and many daughters, and the best known of his sons were Paris and Hector, the brave hero of Troy. Now it was Paris who caused the great Trojan war, which lasted for ten years; for when he was staying in Sparta, a town in Greece, he carried away Helen, the most beautiful woman in Greece—carried her away over the sea to his home in Troy to be his wife. Then messengers came from Sparta demanding Helen from King Priam; but Paris did not wish to let her go, so he persuaded his father to refuse to give her up. Great was the anger of the Spartans when the messengers returned without the beautiful Helen. The king of Sparta, Menelaus, sent messages to all the kings and chiefs round about begging them to help him. Greece at that time was not governed by one sovereign, as Great Britain is, but many kings and chiefs and princes ruled over different parts

of it. Now, when the messages from King Menelaus reached these rulers, they gathered together their men, and got ready their ships, and set sail all together to bring back the beautiful Helen from Troy.

When the Greek fleet reached the Trojan shore, the men drew up their swift, curved ships upon the beach, and set up their tents and spread themselves out over the plain before the city. And many were the battles and single fights between the Greeks and the people of Troy. And at times the Trojans won, and at times the Greeks; but always the greatest glory fell to the lot of Achilles, the son of Peleus, the bravest hero of the Greeks. At length it happened that Agamemnon, the leader of the Greek host—Agamemnon, “king of men,” as Homer calls him—cast eyes of longing on a prize which brave Achilles had won in fight, and he sent men to lead away the prize from the tent of Achilles. Then Achilles was filled with anger against King Agamemnon, and he swore that he should not again lift his sword to do battle for the Greeks, and that his countrymen should feel the loss of his strong arm in the fight, for the insult which they had offered to him. So he refused any more to join battle against the men of Troy; and he sat alone by the swift ships, gazing out upon the wide sea, sorrowful and sad at heart.

Now while swift-footed Achilles sat apart, withdrawn from the fight, the battle raged between Trojans and Greeks; and Hector, the brave son of King Priam of Troy, challenged many of the bravest of the Greeks to single fight, and those who fought with him he slew, one after the other, for there was no man in all the army of the Greeks who was fit to stand up against him, save only god-like Achilles. So day by day the Greeks became weakened in strength and in spirit; and at length

the pride of Agamemnon was humbled, and he sent messengers to swift-footed Achilles, begging him to come and fight once more with his countrymen, and offering to restore to him the prize which had been taken from him, and to add to it many rich presents of gold and of silver.

But Achilles still refused to fight; for he said, "I will not join in battle or in counsel with Agamemnon, for he hath once already deceived and injured me, and he shall not again cheat me with his fair words." So the messengers sadly bore back the message of swift-footed Achilles to Agamemnon, king of men.

Now Achilles had a dear friend in the Grecian host named Patroclus. And Patroclus was grieved in heart when he saw how the Greeks were stricken by the Trojans because Achilles had withdrawn himself from the fight, and how the bravest of the Greek heroes were slain by the hand of man-slaying Hector, the son of King Priam. And Patroclus reproached Achilles for so long cherishing his anger against King Agamemnon, and prayed that, if he himself would not fight, he would at least suffer him to array himself in his armour, and to lead forth his men to battle against the Trojans. So Achilles suffered him, and Patroclus clad himself in the glittering armour of Achilles, and led forth his men to battle. And many brave deeds he did in the fight, till at length he fell by the hand of the hero Hector, who stripped him of the armour of Achilles which Achilles had suffered him to wear.

Now, while Achilles sat alone by the ships, gazing sadly out upon the sea, a messenger came to him to tell him that brave Patroclus had fallen, and that his splendid armour had become the prize of Hector, the son of Priam. Then Achilles was overcome with grief, and he threw himself on the ground and wept, and sprinkled himself



with ashes, and tore his hair and his garments. But "silver-footed" Thetis, the goddess of the sea, who was the mother of Achilles, was grieved when she beheld the sorrow of her dear son; and she rose from the depths of the sea and stood beside him, and spoke to him in soothing words, bidding him tell her what grieved him. So in sad words Achilles bewailed his lot to his mother, telling her how his dear comrade Patroclus had fallen in battle; how he was unable to avenge his death because his splendid armour had become the prize of man-slaying Hector; and how, while the fight was raging, and the Greeks were stricken by the Trojans, he, Achilles, the champion of the Greeks, was sitting idle by the ships, "a useless burden on the earth." Then Thetis spoke gentle words to him, comforting him, and promising to return at dawn the following day, bringing him a suit of armour more splendid than that which he had lost.

And straightway the silver-footed goddess sped to Olympus, the mountain on which the old Greeks believed that the gods and goddesses had their homes. (For they were not Christians, these ancient people of Greece, and they knew not the true God.) And she besought Vulcan, the god of fire, whom she found busy in his great forge, that he would make a suit of armour for her brave son Achilles, the hero of the Greek host. And Vulcan granted her prayer; and he wrought a splendid helmet fitted to the brows of Achilles, and a breastplate to cover his chest, and greaves for his limbs, and a wonderful shield, the like of which was never seen before or since.

So when the eastern sky was red with the rising morn, silver-footed Thetis stood once more beside her dear son, bearing the glittering armour which the god Vulcan had wrought for him. And Achilles clad him-



self in the armour, and went forth to do battle for the Greeks, and to avenge the death of his dear friend Patroclus; and wherever he appeared the tide of battle turned in favour of the Greeks, and single-handed he slew many of the bravest Trojans, and at length he came against Hector, the champion of Troy. But when Hector beheld him approaching, clad in his wonderful armour, which blazed like fire, fear seized upon him and he took to flight. Three times he fled round the walls of Troy, and three times swift-footed Achilles pursued him, till at length Hector strengthened himself and resolved to fight against his foe. Then he stood up against Achilles, and the two heroes did battle together, and Hector was slain; and Achilles tied his dead body to his chariot, and dragged it through the dust to the camp of the Greeks:

The rest of the *Iliad* tells how the Trojans lamented for the loss of their brave champion; and how the aged King Priam, the father of Hector, made his way in the darkness of night through the camp of the Greeks to the tent of Achilles, and besought him to deliver up the body of Hector, that the Trojans might give it honourable burial. We are glad to think that the noble Achilles was touched by the sorrow of the old king, and gave up to him the body of his son; and Priam bore the body back to Troy, and the Trojans mourned over it, and buried it in pomp and state.



COIN OF ILIUM OR TROY.

## CHAPTER II.

### SOPHOCLES—THE PERSIAN WARS—THE GOLDEN AGE OF GREECE.

**D**URING the time of Homer, as we have seen, Greece was not one kingdom, as Great Britain is, but was divided into a great many little kingdoms and states, which often made war against each other. Now, if it had always been so—if these little states had always been at war with each other, and had never united together—the Greeks would never have become the great people they did. But just about five hundred years after the time of Homer (in the fifth century B.C.) something happened which brought all the Greeks together—which taught them to love Greece, the common country of them all, and to be willing to sacrifice for her sake their petty quarrels among themselves; and this it was that made the Greeks become the greatest people in the world.

What happened was the Persian wars. Now the Persian wars are perhaps the most important wars in the history of Europe. Persia, as you know, is a country in the west of Asia. It is not a very great country now, but in the fifth century B.C. it was a very powerful and wealthy kingdom, compared with which Greece seemed a very small, unimportant place. But the Persians were not a noble, artistic people like

the Greeks. They never could have written such beautiful poems and carved such splendid statues as the Greeks: they were little more than powerful, haughty savages. Now it happened that the people of Athens, the chief city of Greece, had given offence to Darius, the king of Persia, and he determined to punish them. So in the year 490 First invasion of Greece by the Persians. B.C. he sent an enormous army into Greece, thinking it would be easy to conquer such a weak little country as it seemed to him.

Well, this mighty army passed over into Europe, and made its way to Greece. There it took up its position in a great plain called Marathon, not far from Battle of Marathon, 490 B.C. Athens. Now the number of the fighting-men in Athens was very small compared with the great host of the Persians; but the Athenians were not dismayed by that. They sent messengers to the other states of Greece begging for help against the foreign foe. Then they gathered together all the men who were able to carry arms, and boldly marched out of the city. At first there was some discussion among the generals; for some of them thought they should attack the enemy at once, and others that they should wait till the people of Sparta should send an army to help them. But at length Miltiades, the bravest, ablest general of them all, urged so strongly that they should fight at once that the others yielded to him. So with all the skill he had, he made his arrangements for the battle. Then he gave the signal of attack, and the little handful of Greeks rushed boldly against the great host of the enemy, who almost laughed as they saw them coming. But so bravely did the Greeks fight, and so skilfully had Miltiades made his preparations, that soon the Persian columns wavered and gave way;

and almost before any one knew what had happened, the mighty army of Persia was broken up, and the men were flying helter-skelter to their ships, followed by the brave little band of Greeks.

Such was the great battle of Marathon—the most important battle, perhaps, that ever was fought. Had it ended differently—had the Persians conquered the Greeks—the state of Europe would have been very different even now from what it is ; for we all—all the civilized peoples of modern Europe—have learned much from the people of ancient Greece, which we never could have learned had Greece been conquered and ruled over by a barbarous nation like Persia. Had the Greeks not been a free people, they never would have written the beautiful poems, and carved the splendid statues, and built the magnificent temples and monuments, which are still, though in fragments or in ruins, the wonder of the world.

Of course the Persian king was furious when he heard of the defeat of his army, and he determined to invade Greece a second time with a greater force than before ; but he died before he had made all his preparations. However, the next king, Xerxes, assembled an enormous fleet and army, which he himself led to Greece ten years after the battle of Marathon (in 480 B.C.). This time little Greece stood out against the vast power of Persia no less nobly than she had done ten years before. It was now that the battles of Thermopylæ and Salamis were fought—battles no less glorious to Greece than Marathon itself. At Thermopylæ, it was the people of Sparta (the city of Helen of Troy) who specially distinguished themselves. Three hundred Spartans, led by their king,

Second  
invasion  
of Greece,  
480 B.C.

Battle of  
Thermopylæ.

Leonidas, and accompanied by some other Greeks, had been sent to guard the pass of Thermopylæ against the advancing host of the Persians. Leonidas posted his small army at the entrance to the narrow pass, on one side of which was the sea, while on the other it was bounded by high mountains; and then calmly awaited the attack of the Persians. When Xerxes saw what a small band of men was opposed to his huge army, he expected that they would retreat as soon as he attacked them; but again and again the brave handful of Greeks drove back the mighty host of the enemy, until the Persians almost despaired of forcing their way through the pass at all. But at last a base, treacherous Greek, named Ephialtes, went secretly to the army of Xerxes, and told him of a path across the mountains by which he could enter Greece, offering to guide him and his army over it. When Leonidas heard that the Persians had discovered the path over the mountains, he knew that he and his men were lost; but he never thought of retreating. He declared that he and his Spartans would remain at their post to the last—would die at it, if need were; but he gave permission to the other Greeks to retire while there was yet time. Most of them took advantage of the permission; but the Spartans and a few other Greeks remained fighting bravely in the pass. Then, when the Persians had crossed the mountains, they fell upon the Greeks in the rear, so that the brave little band was surrounded by the enemy. Even yet they would not yield: nobly the Three Hundred, or what was left of them, stood up against the thousands who assailed them, until man by man they had fallen fighting for their country. So the Persian host rolled on into Greece over the dead bodies of the brave Spartans, only to be utterly defeated in the



great sea-fight of Salamis by the Athenian general Themistocles.

The Persian wars had brought out all the strength and skill and courage of the Greeks; and after their glorious victories over Persia, they became a very great and powerful people. The fifty years that follow the wars are what is called the Golden Age of Greece. During that time many of the noblest of the Greek buildings were built, and many fine poems were written to celebrate the victories of Marathon and Salamis; and there lived in Athens, almost at the same time, some of the very greatest sculptors and philosophers and dramatists that have ever been born.

It is about one of these dramatists that I am going to tell you now—Sophocles. He was born just five

Birth of  
Sophocles,  
495 B.C. years before the battle of Marathon, in a village about a mile from Athens. Though he was only a little boy of five years old when the great battle was fought, he must have heard his father or some of the slaves in the house talking of it; and very likely he and his brothers and sisters (if he had any) played at Greeks and Persians, just as boys and girls at school now-a-days play at French and English. By the time of the battle of Salamis he was a lad of fifteen, and a very beautiful, clever, graceful lad he was. We hear that he won prizes for music and gymnastics; and that, when in honour of the great victory of Salamis there were games and processions at Athens, Sophocles was chosen to lead the choir, because of his beauty and grace and his skill in music. Afterwards, when he grew up, he became a great dramatist—some people say the greatest of all the Greek dramatists. I do not know about that; but at any rate we know of only two others who can be



named along with him. He died when he was a very old man—ninety years of age—after writing one hundred and thirteen plays!

Death of  
Sophocles,  
405 B.C.

Unfortunately most of the dramas of Sophocles have been lost. Only seven are left, one of the finest of which is *Antigonē*. This drama is named from its heroine, a noble girl, the daughter of Œdipus, king of Thebes, a city of Greece.

The story of  
*Antigonē*.

When Œdipus was old and blind, he was driven out of Thebes, the city over which he had ruled, because of a sin which he had committed. And Antigone went with her father into exile, and guided his footsteps, and tended him with loving care, until he died. After that she returned to Thebes, where a new king was reigning, named Kreon.

Now Antigone had two brothers who were at war with each other, and Kreon the king was angry against Polynices, the elder brother, but the younger he favoured. And Antigone sought to make peace between her brothers, for she was a loving sister; but her efforts were in vain. The two brothers led out their armies against each other in open fight, and when the battle was over, they were found lying side by side, dead, upon the battle-field.

Then Kreon buried the younger brother with all due pomp and ceremony; but he ordered that the elder, Polynices, should be left unburied on the spot where he had fallen, and he proclaimed throughout the city that if any one should attempt to bury the body, he should be stoned to death by the people. Now, according to the religion of the Greeks, it was regarded as a sin to leave the dead unburied; and it was believed that if any one remained unburied after death, the gods were angry against that person and against his family. So Antigone

was greatly grieved when she heard what the king had proclaimed; but she decided that it was better to disobey his command than to be guilty of sin against the gods, and she resolved to bury her brother, even although she knew what a dreadful death awaited her if she were found doing so. Having thus made up her mind, she spoke to her sister Ismene of the proclamation of the king, and begged her to help to bury the dead body of their dear brother, reminding her that more terrible was the wrath of the gods than the anger of kings. But Ismene was weak, and feared the king more than she revered the gods; so she refused to help. Then Antigone went forth bravely alone to the spot where the body lay.

But Kreon had set guards round the spot, and while Antigone was sprinkling dust on the body, they caught her and brought her before the king. Full of strength and courage in the thought that she had only done what she ought, Antigone stood firmly before him, her noble form drawn up to its full height; and when he asked her sternly, "Did you do this thing?" she looked at him calmly with her beautiful brave eyes, and answered, "I did." Then Kreon asked her if she had known that he had forbidden the burial of her brother, and that death was the punishment for any one who disobeyed. Again she looked the king steadily in the face, and answered, with her noble head erect, that she had known of his command, but that she preferred to disobey the law of a mere man rather than to transgress the sacred laws of the immortal gods.

Kreon was furious at her reply, and bade the guards take her away and bury her alive in a lonely cave among the hills. So they led away the beautiful, brave girl—brave still, although such a terrible death was so

near her, and although she grieved to leave so soon the sweet air of heaven and the beautiful earth, and those who were dear to her in the world. But she knew that she had done what was right; and she was happier than Kreon, on whom the anger of the gods soon made itself felt in sad misfortunes and dire calamities.



THEMISTOCLES.

## CHAPTER III.

### SOCRATES—THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.

**J**UST eleven years after the great battle of Salamis, when the beautiful boy who had led the choir of boys' voices that rose in thanksgiving for the victory was a young man of six-and-twenty, busily writing those dramas which the next year were to win for him a victory no less great; when the glorious Persian wars were still fresh in the proud hearts of the Greeks; when the stately buildings that made Athens the noblest city in the world were rapidly rising, there was born in a village near Athens a child who was afterwards to be called "the wisest of men." That child was Socrates, the great Greek philosopher.

**Birth of  
Socrates,  
469 B.C.**

Socrates was very unlike Sophocles in one respect: so far from being beautiful, like the great dramatist, he was very plain, and indeed quite ugly; but he had a wonderful way of winning the love of all who knew him, and he had great power over the young men he met. In all history there is scarcely any other man who had such power to draw men to him—any man whom, even yet, after three-and-twenty centuries, we seem to know so well and honour so much as Socrates of Athens. One person, however, we read of who did not get on well with the great philosopher, and that was his wife Xanthippe,

who was a regular shrew, and was always scolding and nagging at her husband. He used to take her scoldings very mildly and good-naturedly; and when she made the house too unpleasant with her temper, he would go out and walk about the streets, with his head sunk on his chest, deep in thought. Then some of the young men who knew him and looked up to him would gather round him, and he would go and sit with them in the market-place, or walk about in the public gardens, talking about deep and grave subjects for hours together, till the sun set and night came on. At these times he would forget all about his dinner; and sometimes he would be a whole day without any food, and at other times he would have only a piece of coarse bread and a little water. But he did not care about that; he was quite satisfied with any sort of food, so long as he had peace to think, and young men to talk to and to question. He had a way of putting a great many questions to people so as to find out what was in their minds; and sometimes, when a very conceited young man came to him, who thought he knew a great deal, the philosopher would put one question to him after another in such a way that at last the poor young man was obliged to confess he did not know anything at all. One thing Socrates believed was, that no man really knew anything, but that most men were foolish enough to think they did. Once a certain Athenian had gone to the temple at Delphi, which was sacred to the god Apollo, and had asked the oracle who was the wisest man; and the answer, given by the priestess, was that there was none wiser than Socrates. When Socrates was told this, he explained it by saying that, while other men *thought* they knew something, he was wiser than they because he *knew* that he knew nothing.

But though Socrates preferred to spend his time in thinking and studying and conversing, he did not refuse to fight when his country needed him. Three times we hear of him taking up arms; and each time he was distinguished, not only by his courage, but by his power of enduring cold, and toil, and hardship. Nevertheless, we could have wished that he had never needed to fight—not for his sake, but for the sake of Greece. For the war in which he fought was not a glorious war of liberty, like that against Persia, which brought strength and greatness to the conquerors; it was a wicked war in which Greek fought against his brother Greek, and which brought only weakness and ruin to their beautiful country.

We have seen that the reason why Greece was able to overcome the mighty strength of Persia was, that the different Greek states joined together to fight against the common enemy. If only they had stood together always! But it was not to be so. Less than

Beginning  
of the Pelo-  
ponnesian  
war,  
431 B.C.

fifty years after the close of the Persian wars (in 431 B.C.), there broke out a terrible war among the Greeks themselves, which lasted twenty-seven years—the Peloponnesian war.

The cause of this war was nothing but jealousy between the two most powerful Greek states, Athens and Sparta. The Greeks were a very wonderful people, as I have said—brave, and beautiful, and artistic; but of course they had their faults, like other nations, and one of these faults was jealousy. Whenever any general or statesman became very powerful, his countrymen seemed always jealous of him—afraid that he should make himself a tyrant; and they would find some excuse for putting him in prison, or banishing him from the state. Miltiades, the great general who won the battle of



Marathon, was an instance of this; for the people of Athens, thinking he had become too powerful, made some excuse to put him in prison, where he died.

The Peloponnesian war is named from Peloponnesus, the old name of the south part of Greece, in which Sparta was situated, and which is now called the Morea. During the Persian wars, Athens had led all the other Greek states, and had gained the greatest glory; so the people of Sparta became jealous of Athens, and made some excuse for quarrelling with the Athenians. Thus there broke out that terrible war, which lasted till 404 B.C., and caused the downfall of Greece.

I am not going to tell about any of the battles that were fought during the Peloponnesian war, for they were not glorious battles like Marathon and Thermopylæ. But of course there were many brave deeds done during the war, and two in particular are told of Socrates. We hear that the first time he bore arms as a soldier, while he was fighting bravely in battle amidst his comrades, he saw a young friend fall wounded by the enemy some little distance off, and immediately made his way to the spot, and stood by the young man, and protected him from the enemy, and so saved his life. After the battle, he was offered the prize given for courage in fight, which was a crown and a suit of armour. But he refused it, and insisted that it should be given to Alcibiades, the young friend whom he had saved, and who afterwards became one of the greatest Athenian generals. Alcibiades showed his gratitude to Socrates by saving his life in the second battle in which the great philosopher fought. It was on this occasion that Socrates, seeing another young friend, Xenophon, lying wounded in the thick of the fight, raised him on his shoulders and

carried him to a place of safety, fighting his way as he went. Xenophon afterwards became a great historian, as well as a great general, and it is in his writings and those of Plato—another pupil of Socrates—that we get to know and love the philosopher.

After serving in three campaigns, Socrates settled down in Athens, where he spent his time in thinking and studying and conversing with his disciples, as I have said. There was no one better known by sight in the streets of Athens than Socrates, with his ugly face and his coarse, shabby cloak, and the band of young men who always followed him, talking and listening.

But even Socrates, simple and noble and humble as he was, had his enemies; and at last, when he was an old man of seventy, they got up charges against him, and he was brought before the judges and tried. The charges brought against him were that he did not believe in the gods of Athens, and that he spoiled the young men whom he taught by teaching them to disbelieve. I think it is likely that Socrates did not believe in all the gods of Greece—Jupiter and Apollo, and all the rest—but I am sure he believed in a Divine Power that watches over men; and that the young men never learned anything wrong from him.

Calmly and nobly the old man defended himself, standing up alone, in his coarse, threadbare cloak; but after all, the judges found him guilty, though he had lived such a simple life, caring for nothing but to do the work which he thought had been given him to do. They found him guilty, and condemned him to die! Very quietly and calmly did the brave philosopher hear his sentence. If his judges wished for his death, he said, they would not have had

long to wait; he was old, and could not have many more years to live. But for his own part, he did not look upon death as an evil, since he knew that, after death, he should join the noble men who had lived and died in the past. Of this, too, he was sure, that whether in life or in death no evil could befall a good man, over whom the Divine Power had watched. "And now," he wound up, "it is time for us to go—you to life, I to death; and which of the two is best is known only to God."

He was kept some time in prison before he was put to death; and during that time his friends made plans for his escape, and did all in their power to persuade him to go. But he refused to leave his prison. Since his countrymen had seen good to put him to death, he said, he was resolved to submit. So every morning his young friends came to the prison, and waited till the doors were opened. Then they would go in and sit with Socrates, and listen to him talking for hours together. At last the day came when he was to die. His young friends had gathered together outside the prison even earlier than usual that morning, for they had heard that it was the last which their master had to spend on earth, and they did not wish to lose one moment of his presence among them and of his wise converse. When at length the jailer opened the doors and permitted them to enter, they found Socrates calmly sitting up rubbing his leg, from which the irons he had worn had just been taken off, while his wife Xanthippe sat beside him, with a child in her arms, weeping and lamenting. All day long his friends stayed with him, conversing gravely and earnestly about the gods, the soul of man, and the life beyond the grave. When the sun was sinking below the hill-tops in the west—the

last sun which Socrates was ever to see on earth—the jailer entered with the cup of poison which he was condemned to drink. Calmly Socrates took it from the man's hand and drank it off to the dregs, he alone unmoved of all who were present. One friend covered his face with the folds of his cloak, that Socrates might not see the tears he could not keep back; another fled from the room in uncontrollable grief; while a third sobbed aloud. Even the jailer was moved to tears as he bade the noble philosopher farewell. Never, he said, had any man so good, so meek, and so noble come into that place.

So died the man of whom it was said that he was the best of his time, as well as the wisest and most just.



GREEK PHILOSOPHER.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ALEXANDER THE GREAT—THE RISE OF MACEDON.

I HAVE said that the Peloponnesian war brought about the downfall of Greece; and we are now going to see how this came to pass.

Once on a time an old chief lay dying, and he gathered his sons round his death-bed to give them his parting advice. He pointed to a bundle of arrows tied together that lay at his side, and he bade his sons each try to bend or to break the arrows without untying the string. And they tried; but they could neither bend nor break the arrows. Then the dying chief bade them untie the bundle, and break the arrows one by one. This the young men did with ease. "Now," said their father, "so long as you stand together, you shall be like the bundle of arrows—your enemies shall not have power to bend or to break you; but so soon as you fall apart, remember that the fate of the single arrows shall be yours—you shall be broken in fragments and scattered to the winds."

At the time of the Peloponnesian war the Greeks had forgotten the truth that is contained in this old story. Year by year, as they fought amongst themselves, the strength by which they had overthrown the hosts of Persia became weakened; men were killed, money was wasted; and when

Effects of the Peloponnesian war.

the war ended, the people of Greece were no longer able to fight a foreign foe. Meantime, while Greece was becoming weaker and weaker, there was a country on the north of it which was growing stronger and stronger every day. That country was Macedon, of which Alexander the Great was king.

Even before the time of Alexander, the Greeks had been conquered by the people of Macedon under Philip, the father of Alexander. When he was a boy,

Philip of  
Macedon.

Philip had been carried away as a prisoner of war to the city of Thebes in Greece; and there he grew up and learned much which he would never have learned if he had been brought up at home in Macedon. Afterwards, when he was king of Macedon, he made use of all he had learned in Greece against the Greeks themselves. One thing he had learned was that the best way to weaken Greece was to make the different Greek states fight against each other; so he kept on stirring up jealousies among them until they were all at war with one another, and two of them begged Philip to come and help them to fight against the people of Athens and Thebes. Of course that was just what he wanted, so he at once led a large army

Battle of  
Chæronea,  
338 B.C.

into Greece; and at a place called Chæronea he completely defeated the Athenians and the Thebans. That was in the year 338 B.C., a little more than one hundred and fifty years after the glorious battle of Marathon. Greece never recovered from that defeat; it never was again the great country it had been before. Just as we may say that Marathon made Greece, so we may say that Chæronea ruined it.

Alexander, the son of Philip, who was then only seventeen or eighteen years of age, was present at the battle; and young though he was, he made proud the heart of



his father by the courage with which he fought, and the skill with which he led the troops intrusted to him. We are told that after the battle Philip embraced his son, and said to him, "Go, my son, and seek another empire, for that which I leave to thee is not worthy of thee!" Even before the battle, Alexander had often showed that he was by nature brave and full of daring. There is a story that a certain man had a horse which he wanted to sell to Philip—a fine, high-spirited animal, pure white, with a black mark like an ox's head on its flank; but as none of his nobles could manage it when they tried, Philip ordered the man to take it away. Alexander, however, who was then a boy, begged that he might be allowed to mount the horse; and so well did he sit it, and so cleverly did he manage it, that at last it became quite tame and gentle with him. So he kept the horse, and called it Bucephalus (ox-head), because of the mark on it. Afterwards, when he grew up to be a man, and led his army into distant lands, conquering all who came against him, he always had Bucephalus with him; and when at last the good horse died, far away in India, his master built a town in his honour and called it Bucephala.

Alexander was not only a better horseman than most young men of his time; he was also a better scholar, and knew more about the learning of the Greeks. When he was a lad, he was fortunate enough to be taught by the great Greek philosopher Aristotle; and from him he learned to understand and love the works of the great Greek writers. Above all, we are told, he loved the works of the poet Homer, and greatly admired his hero, swift-footed Achilles, whom he ever sought to imitate.

It was when Alexander's father Philip died, scarcely

two years after the battle of Chæronea, that the Greeks first discovered what an able soldier Alexander was. When they heard of the death of Philip, they thought the time had come to make Greece independent of

Revolt of  
the Greeks  
against  
Macedon.

Macedon; for Alexander was still so young that they did not think he would be able to lead an army against them. So they rose up and fought against the Macedonians in Greece, and declared themselves free; but in a wonderfully

They are  
defeated by  
Alexander.

short time Alexander arrived in Greece with his army, and soon showed that he was more than a match for the Greeks, who were weakened by their many wars among themselves, and who were soon glad to make peace with him.

For some time after that, Alexander was employed fighting and conquering the wild tribes on the north of Macedon; but in 334 B.C. he set out with a large army for Persia. First

Alexander  
sets out  
for Persia,  
334 B.C.

he crossed the Hellespont, the strait separating Europe from Asia Minor, which is now called the Dardanelles. When he reached the place where Troy had stood, he held games and feasts in honour of the Trojan war. Not long afterwards, a large army of Persians met him at the banks of the river

Battle of the  
Granicus.

Granicus, which is not very far from Troy, and tried to prevent him from advancing any further. But he completely defeated the army, and then marched southwards, conquering all who opposed him; and he soon made himself master of the whole of Asia Minor. There is a story that, in a town of Asia Minor called Gordium, there was a chariot which had belonged to one of the old kings of the place, the yoke of which was tied to the pole by such a wonderful knot that no one could unfasten it;



and it was believed that whoever could untie that knot would rule over all Asia. When Alexander saw the knot, he did not try to untie it, but it is said he simply cut it with his sword. So now-a-days, when any one finds an easy way out of a difficulty, we say he has "cut the Gordian knot."

When the king of Persia heard of Alexander's conquests, he assembled a great army and led it himself against the Macedonians. At Issus, at the entrance to Syria, the two armies met, and the Persians were utterly routed. Then Alexander marched through Syria, and took the town of Tyre, after besieging it for several months. He next led his army into Egypt, where he founded a town which he called, from his own name, Alexandria. After remaining some time in Egypt, he again marched through Syria, crossed the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, and defeated the Persian army for the third time in the plain of Arbela. During the next few years he laid waste several Persian towns, and conquered the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes, one after the other. No one could stand against him; never was leader so successful. Some of the savage people actually began to think that he was not a man at all but a god; and the brilliant young general himself, elated with all his wonderful triumphs and with the homage which he everywhere received, almost believed that the priests of Ammon had spoken truly. For it is said that, when he was in Egypt, Alexander visited the temple of the Egyptian god Ammon, and the priests there declared him to be the son of the god.

**Battle of  
Issus,  
333 B.C.**

**Founding of  
Alexandria,  
332 B.C.**

**Battle of  
Arbela,  
331 B.C.**

After he had conquered all the people on the west of the Indus, he resolved to cross that river and enter

India. So in the year 327 B.C. he led his army to the west bank of the Indus, where they cut down a forest to make ships, and then sailed across the river. Arrived on the east side of the river, he fought and conquered many Indian chiefs and founded many towns—one, as I said above, in honour of his horse Bucephalus. Then, still unsatisfied with all the conquests he had made, he was eager to push forward to the great Indian river the Ganges; but his men, heartily sick of fighting, and of marching for miles under a scorching sun, began to grumble among themselves, and at last refused to go any further. So Alexander, sorely against his will, was obliged to turn back. On the march back, the way lay through the great desert that lies to the west of the Indus, and terrible were the hardships which the army suffered as they passed through it; more than half the men perished from thirst, or famine, or exhaustion, and many were slain by the savage tribes who, from time to time, made sudden attacks upon them. When they reached Babylon, Alexander resolved to remain for some time in that city, and to make it the capital of his great empire, which now stretched from the Danube to the Indus.

But he had not long been there when he was seized with a sudden illness, and died in a few days. That was in the year 323 B.C., when he was only about thirty-two years of age.

When we read the life of Alexander, we are apt to get tired of hearing of so many battles and conquests; but we must not forget that these conquests really did good even to the people who were conquered, for wherever Alexander went he tried to spread Greek learning and Greek civilization. There is a story told about him which I think is more pleasant to read than the

history of all his great victories. It is said that once, when he was taken ill in Asia Minor, he received an anonymous letter telling him to beware of his doctor, who was called Philip, for that he intended to poison him. Now Alexander trusted and believed in Philip, and his faith in him was not shaken in the least by this letter ; so when Philip brought him a cup of medicine, he took it from him without a moment's hesitation and drank it off. As he did so, he handed the letter to the good doctor, who, we can well believe, was much touched at this proof of his king's faith in him.



COINS OF PHILIP AND ALEXANDER.

## CHAPTER V.

### REGULUS—THE RISE OF ROME—THE PUNIC WARS.

AS yet I have told you nothing of any people save those who lived in the eastern peninsula of southern Europe ; but now we are going to follow the course of history and pass over into the central peninsula, Italy, where I shall introduce you to a people no less great and wonderful than the Greeks—I mean the Romans.

It is generally supposed that Rome was built in 753 B.C., about two hundred and fifty years after Homer lived ; but that is really not known for certain. We do know, however, that even before the Persian wars, in which the Greeks so nobly won their freedom, the Romans had shown no less plainly than the Greeks, though not in such a glorious way, their hatred of tyranny and their love of liberty : it was in 510 B.C. that the Romans banished their king, Tarquinius, who had been a cruel tyrant, and resolved that they would never be ruled over by another king. Tarquinius got a powerful chief to help him, and marched against Rome with a great many men, thinking he would force the people to make him their king again ; but the Romans went out against him and drove him back. There never was another king in Rome, and no single

Foundation  
of Rome,  
753 B.C.

King  
Tarquin  
banished,  
510 B.C.

man ruled over the people, except in time of war, for many centuries.

I have said that the Romans were not less great than the Greeks; but they were very different from them. They had not the Greek love of beauty, and the Greek power of creating beautiful things. They were not naturally poets and artists; they were soldiers and statesmen and lawyers. If they could not carve beautiful statues and rear noble temples like the Greeks, they could at least frame laws which, after all these centuries, still live and are in force to-day in countries very far distant from Rome—countries which the old Romans did not even know to exist. No doubt it was largely due to those excellent laws that Rome grew daily in strength and in greatness, until at last her rule extended over the whole known world; but I think that another important cause of this was the fact that the freedom and prosperity of the state of Rome formed the *ideal* of every worthy Roman citizen. Do you know what I mean by an ideal? It is something to be lived for and up to; something which has nothing to do with ourselves and our pleasures, our likings and dislikings; something which we would give all that we have and are to reach—our fortune and friends, our life and liberty. That is what the freedom and greatness of Rome were to every good citizen at the time I am going to tell you of—when Regulus lived. The little Roman boys, while they were still at their mothers' knees, were taught that they must always put the state before anything else—before father and mother and self—and when they grew up they did not forget these lessons. They lived simply—ate plain food and wore coarse clothes—and they kept themselves always practised in arms, so that they were ready to fight whenever their country needed them—



ready to lay down their lives and all that they had for the sake of their ideal. Thus Rome grew in strength and greatness day by day, till at last the people, who had grown up in what was at first a little mud-built town overlooking the Tiber, became the greatest, the only power in the world. Then they fell; but not till they had lost their ideal—till they had become proud and haughty, caring for nothing but ease and luxury. That, however, was not till long, very long, after the time I am going to speak of now.

Though, as I have said, Rome is supposed to have been built in the eighth century B.C., it was not till several centuries afterwards—not till the third century B.C.—that the Romans became one of the most important powers of Europe. At the time when the Greeks were deciding the fate of Europe at Marathon and at Salamis, and afterwards, when Alexander the Great was gaining his brilliant victories in Asia, the Romans were preparing for their future greatness by strengthening their city, making their laws, and conquering the other peoples of Italy. By the middle of the third century B.C., when Regulus lived, they had made themselves masters of all Italy; and it was then that those wars began which made Rome take a foremost place in the history of Europe—I mean the Punic wars, the fourth of the great wars of Europe.

On the north coast of Africa and the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, just opposite the island of Sicily, there stood, at the time of which I am going to  
**Carthage.** tell you, and for many centuries before, the city of Carthage. In the third century B.C., the city had become very great and wealthy, and had conquered, by means of its powerful fleet, parts of the coast of Spain, and several islands in the Mediterranean—Cor-



sica, the Balearic Islands, and a large part of Sicily. It was in Sicily that the Romans first came forward as the enemy of Carthage, and that the Punic wars began. The name is derived from *Pœni*, the Latin name for the Carthaginians (who were of *Phœnician* origin), and is applied to the wars between Rome and Carthage, which lasted for several years, and ended with the complete destruction of Carthage.

The Punic  
wars.

I am not going to tell you here the excuse which the Romans made use of for beginning the wars, but I think the real cause of the wars was that the Romans, after having conquered all Italy, wanted to conquer Sicily too, and to put down the Carthaginians, of whom, no doubt, they were jealous.

Whatever was the true cause, the Romans sent an army into Sicily, and laid siege to several towns held by Carthage, some of which they conquered.

After fighting in Sicily for some years, sometimes winning and sometimes losing, they resolved to attack Carthage itself. So in 256 B.C. they got together a great fleet, which they sent to Africa under the command of Regulus and another general.

Regulus  
sets out for  
Carthage,  
256 B.C.

Now Regulus was a very able general, and won some brilliant victories over the Carthaginians; but it is not his skill as a general that has made him famous even to our own day. If he had always been victorious, I don't think I should have cared to tell you about him at all. It was not when he conquered, but when he was defeated, that he showed how very great he was. He was a true Roman citizen—perhaps the noblest citizen that Rome ever had; and, as I told you, the freedom and prosperity of Rome were the ideal of every true citizen. They were certainly the ideal of Regulus. A stern, simple, upright

man, loving his country with all his heart, he was always ready to do whatever Rome bade him without asking why, always ready to sacrifice self and life and liberty in her service. So when he was ordered to take the command of the fleet and sail over to Carthage, he obeyed without hesitation.

At first he was very successful. Just off the south coast of Sicily he met the Carthaginian fleet, which, **Conquers Carthaginian fleet.** although it was much larger than the Roman one, he completely defeated; then he sailed to Africa, where he landed, and won several important victories. But at last the Carthaginians got the help of a great Greek general, who added **He is taken prisoner.** to the army, trained the men thoroughly, and then led them out against the Romans. The Roman army was completely scattered, and Regulus himself was taken prisoner.

He remained a prisoner for several years while the war between Carthage and Rome still went on. Cannot you fancy how terrible those years of idleness and captivity in a strange land must have been to the brave and active soldier, to the loving father who had a wife and children at home in his beloved Rome; how bitter must have been the thought that he could do nothing to help his country in her struggles; how eagerly he must have listened for every scrap of news about the war, hoping day after day that his countrymen would come victorious to Carthage and set him free—free to see again his dear wife and little ones, free to fight once more for Rome, which was dearer to him even than they? At last, after five or six years, the time came when he might be free. The Romans had gained a great many victories in Sicily, and the Carthaginians resolved to send ambassadors to Rome to ask for peace, or

for an exchange of prisoners. Along with the ambassadors they sent Regulus, after making him take his oath that, if the Romans did not agree to their terms, he would come back to Carthage. He is sent to Rome with ambassadors. They thought that, when Regulus knew that his own liberty and perhaps his life depended upon it, he would be sure to persuade the Romans to accept the terms offered. But they did not know the power of the Roman ideal in the heart of a true Roman citizen.

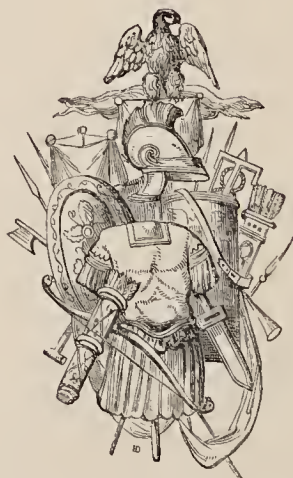
Well, on reaching Rome, the Carthaginian ambassadors and Regulus were brought before the senate—the body of men who made the laws for Rome, as our Houses of Parliament do for our country. When the ambassadors had delivered the message they had brought, the senate dismissed them, but Regulus they bade remain. Then they asked him for his advice: did he, knowing the condition of both states and both armies, think it well for Rome to accept the terms offered? Now Regulus knew that on his answer depended his life; but he did not pause for that—I am sure he did not pause one moment. In a clear, firm voice he answered, His advice to the senate. “No! refuse!” And then he explained so clearly the reasons why it was better for Rome to refuse the terms offered by Carthage that the senators saw that they must refuse. But they said that Regulus must not go back to Carthage, where no doubt he would be put to death. He should stay with his own countrymen, and the high priest should free him from his oath.

But Regulus said, “Not so. I have taken my oath, and I will fulfil it. To break an oath is sinful, and brings the anger of the gods. I will not bring the anger of the gods upon Rome—upon my country.”

And he remained firm in his resolve. His friends

argued with him, and tried to persuade him to break his vow ; but in vain. His wife clung weeping round his neck, and his little ones clasped his knees and cried aloud ; but he tore himself away from them—away from Rome, and was true to his vow.

When he reached Carthage, the people of the city, in anger that the embassy had failed, put him to death by slow torture.



ROMAN ARMOUR FROM TRAJAN'S COLUMN.

## CHAPTER VI.

### JULIUS CÆSAR.

**S**O year by year Rome grew in strength and greatness. The Punic wars were fought and won, and Carthage was reduced to a heap of ruins; though not till after the Carthaginians, under their great leader Hannibal, had laid many thousands of brave Romans dead upon the battlefield of Cannæ. Macedon was conquered by Roman arms, and Greece became a Roman province. Rome was a very great power when Cæsar was born—just one hundred years B.C.—but it was to become greater and more powerful still.

**Battle of  
Cannæ,  
216 B.C.**

**Birth of  
Cæsar,  
100 B.C.**

I wish I could say of Cæsar, as I said of Regulus, that the welfare of Rome was his ideal—was what he lived and worked and fought for. But I am afraid I cannot say so. Cæsar was a very great general and statesman—much greater than Regulus—and he was distinguished too, as you will see, as an author; but I do not think he would have gone back, like Regulus, to torture and death in Carthage when wealth and honour were lying at his feet in Rome—not even to save his country and his countrymen from the anger of the gods.

I am not going to tell you about his early battles, and how he pushed and struggled to reach the front in Rome.

It was in the year 59 B.C. that he obtained the highest honour that his fellow-citizens could offer him. He became consul. The consuls were the chief magistrates at Rome. Two were elected every year, and during the following twelve months they ruled like kings; but at the end of that time they had to give up their office, and they were then sent to govern one of the provinces of Rome—the name which the Romans gave to the countries conquered and ruled over by them. The province to which Cæsar was sent was Gaul. Gaul was the old name for the country which is now called France; but at the time that Cæsar went there the whole of Gaul was not yet a province of Rome. Take your map of France and look at the country which lies to the west of the Jura mountains, and through which the river Rhône flows. That country is called Provence, which is the same word as the Latin *provincia*, a province. It had been conquered by Rome, and had become a Roman province, before Cæsar was born.

For nearly nine years Cæsar was governor of Gaul, and during all that time he was almost constantly fighting against some Gallic tribe or other, and was always winning. Never was there a more able, a more successful, or a more popular general. The soldiers of his army quite idolized him. As he rode or walked in the van, strong, tall, handsome, with head uncovered in sunshine and rain, they were willing to follow him to the end of the world; when, on the eve of battle, he addressed one of his stirring speeches to them, they were ready to pour out their last drop of blood for him; and even the most timid in the ranks would rather face the enemy with fearful odds than meet the sharp glance of scorn in his general's eye. Everything fell



before him. One Gallic tribe after another was conquered and became subject to Rome, and still Cæsar advanced with his victorious army. In the year 55 B.C., and again in the following year, he went over to Britain, where he fought and conquered some of the savage tribes who at that time inhabited the islands in which we are living now. He has described what he saw of Britain and of the people of Britain, as well as his Gallic wars, in a book which he wrote, and which many a boy is stumbling through in many a school to-day.

Goes to  
Britain,  
55 B.C.

While Cæsar was fighting in Gaul, the man who had chief power in Rome was Pompey, sometimes called the Great. Now Pompey, like Cæsar, was a very ambitious man, and the two men were very jealous of each other. Pompey was married to Cæsar's daughter Julia, and as long as she lived she managed to keep them on apparently friendly terms. But when her father was in Gaul she died, and then the hatred and jealousy of the two great generals became open and evident. Although Cæsar had a great many friends at Rome, the senate was much more friendly to Pompey than to him; and so Pompey, who had been made consul alone, persuaded it to make a decree commanding Cæsar to break up his army and resign his government.

Pompey.

Decree of  
the senate.

When this decree reached Cæsar he had conquered all Gaul, had even crossed the Rhine and mastered some German tribes who lived on the other side of it, and was in what was then called Gallia Cisalpina (Cisalpine Gaul)—that is, the north part of Italy, which is now called Lombardy and Venetia.

After hearing the decree, he led his army southwards till he reached the banks of a little brook called the

Rubicon, which separated Cisalpine Gaul from Italy proper. According to the laws of Rome, he dared not cross this brook, which separated his province from Italy, without permission from the senate. For a long time he hesitated: one writer tells us that he sat on horseback all night trying to make up his mind what to do; but when the morning rose his courage and resolution rose too, and exclaiming, "The die is cast!" he leaped the stream, followed by his troops. Now-a-days, when any one makes up his mind to do anything after hesitating a long time, we say that he has "crossed the Rubicon."

When the news that Cæsar was advancing reached Rome, there was great alarm and commotion. Pompey and several of the senators left Rome and went to Greece, whither, after conquering all Italy, as well as Pompey's army in Spain, Cæsar followed them. In all his actions Cæsar showed the greatest mercy and generosity, and I think it was quite as much to these qualities as to his brilliant ability as a general that he owed his success and popularity. When he conquered, he always pardoned those who had fought against him; and he gave free permission to any men in his army who had been friends of Pompey to leave him and join Pompey. In

**Battle of  
Pharsalia.**

Greece the armies of the two generals met at a place called Pharsalia, and there was fought one of the most celebrated battles in history.

Pompey's army was very much larger than Cæsar's, and at first it seemed as if Pompey would conquer; but in the end Cæsar completely defeated him. It was a very brilliant victory, and showed great skill on Cæsar's part; but more than all his military skill I admire the order he gave his men, when they were cutting to pieces the flying enemy, "Soldiers, spare your fellow-countrymen!"

After this battle Pompey escaped to Egypt, where the king put him to death, thinking to please Cæsar, who was now victorious everywhere. Some time afterwards, when Cæsar arrived in Egypt, and was presented with the embalmed head of his murdered rival, we are told that he shrank with horror from the sight, and burst into tears; and the king of Egypt found that he had not chosen a good way of pleasing the generous conqueror.

On his return to Rome, his fellow-citizens did not know how to make enough of him. There were feasts and processions in his honour. He was chosen consul for ten years, and was also made dicta-  
Cæsar made  
dictator.  
tor for life—a title which was usually only given to some great general for a short time during an important war. As a statesman Cæsar showed himself as generous as he had been as a general. He proclaimed pardon to all who had fought against him, invited those who had fled to other countries for safety to come back to their homes and lands, and he even gave some of the most important offices in Rome to friends of Pompey. When he had to appoint a man to a place, he never seemed to consider whether he was a friend of his or not; he only thought whether he was the best man for the place.

Yet, in spite of all this, in spite of the many good measures he carried out, there was a large number of men in Rome who were unfavourable to him—some because they were jealous of him, and some because they thought that it was not good for Rome that one man should be so powerful as Cæsar had become; and they were afraid that they were going to have kings again in Rome. Among the first class was a Roman of noble family called Cassius, and among the second was Brutus. Now Brutus was a very noble man, who, like Regulus and the Romans

of an earlier time, held the freedom of Rome dearer than anything else in the world. Cassius, knowing this, worked upon Brutus—told him that Cæsar meant to make himself king, and that the freedom of Rome was in danger, and tried to persuade him to join a number of nobles who had formed a plot to put Cæsar to death. At first Brutus hesitated, for although he loved Rome more than everything else in the world, still Cæsar was his friend, and had shown him many acts of kindness; and his noble nature shrank from the thought of setting upon an unarmed man, a friend, with swords and daggers, and putting him to death. For long he brooded over the matter in great trouble of mind, but at last he decided that duty to his country must come before friendship and gratitude, and that any blow which should free Rome from a tyrant was right and honourable. So he agreed to join the conspirators. I do not mean to say that he was right—I shall leave that for you to decide—but at any rate he *thought* he was doing right.

Then the conspirators arranged the place where the deed was to be done, and the day. The place was to be the senate-house, and the day the fifteenth of March—or the *Ides* of March, as the Romans called it, for they did not number the days of the months as we do. Before the day arrived, Cæsar had been warned by a soothsayer to “beware the Ides of March;” but he only smiled, and thought nothing of it. On his way to the senate on the fatal day he passed the soothsayer, and said to him jestingly, “The Ides of March have come!” “Yes, but they have not passed,” was the answer.

In the senate-hall the conspirators were all ready to receive him, their daggers hidden in the folds of their long cloaks. As had been arranged, one of them came

forward and presented Cæsar with a petition; and while Cæsar was speaking, the others rushed upon him, and plunged their daggers into him. At first, though unarmed, he tried to defend himself alone against them all, but when he saw his friend Brutus strike—

“Ingratitude, more strong than traitors’ arms,  
Quite vanquished him : then burst his mighty heart.”

With the words, “Thou, too, Brutus!”—words which must have cut more deeply into Brutus’s heart than all the daggers that were plunged into Cæsar’s—he wrapped his robe about him and fell upon the ground—at the foot of Pompey’s statue, some writers say.

His death,  
44 B.C.



COIN OF JULIUS CÆSAR.

## CHAPTER VII.

VIRGIL—THE FOUNDATION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

WHEN Brutus saw the great Cæsar lying dead at his feet, he thought that the freedom of the Romans was safe for ever—that never again would a single man rule as king in Rome. But he was mistaken. Not many years after the fatal Ides of March, another Cæsar was ruling in Rome with all the power of the great Julius, and even more of pomp and splendour; while Brutus, driven out of Rome by the citizens, for the sake of whose freedom he had done the terrible deed, had fallen by his own hand on the battle-field of Philippi. That battle was named from the town of Philippi in Mæedon, near which it was fought. Thither Brutus had fled when the people of Rome rose in furious indignation against him and the other murderers of Cæsar; and there, in 42 B.C., two years after Cæsar's death, Brutus and Cassius led out their men to meet the army of Octavianus, Cæsar's nephew and adopted son, who had come against them to avenge his uncle's murder. The two generals, Brutus and Cassius, both fell on the field—"the last of the Romans," as they have been called, because they were the last who clung to the old ideal of Roman freedom. Never again was Rome a free state, as it had been in the days of Regulus. A few years after

Battle of  
Philippi,  
42 B.C.



the battle of Philippi, Octavianus (afterwards called Augustus, which means "the Venerable") was ruling as emperor, the first of a long line stretching from the fall of Roman freedom to the fall of Rome.

Octavianus  
becomes  
Emperor of  
Rome with  
the name  
Augustus.

While the fate of Rome was being decided at Philippi, there was living quietly near Mantua, a town in the north of Italy, which you will still see marked on your map, the greatest of Roman poets—Virgil. I told you that the Romans were not naturally artists and poets like the Greeks; but still, when they conquered Greece, and got to know and understand all the wonderful things the Greeks had done—the statues they had carved, and the poems they had written—they were filled with admiration, and many of the cleverest among them took to studying the works of the Greeks, and were even stirred up to try to write something as good themselves. Now Virgil was one of the Romans who most admired the poems of the Greeks, and who studied them most carefully—especially, I think, the poems of Homer.

In the year 70 B.C., while Julius Cæsar was still struggling to reach the front in Rome, and before he had led as yet his army into Gaul, Virgil was born at a little village near Mantua, where his father seems to have had a small farm. During those stirring years that saw the rise and fall of Cæsar and the death of Roman freedom, the poet appears to have lived quietly, caring but little, as poets are apt to do, whether Cæsar or Pompey conquered, whether Rome was empire or republic, so long as he had peace and leisure to study his beloved Greek books and to try his own hand at writing poetry.

Birth of  
Virgil,  
70 B.C.

After the battle of Philippi, Octavianus and the generals

who had sided with him against Brutus and Cassius rewarded the soldiers who had fought under them by giving them bits of land; and Virgil's farm, like those of others, was taken from him and given to an old soldier. Then Virgil went to Rome, and there, by the help of a powerful friend, he persuaded Octavianus to give him back the land. Afterwards he became a favourite with the emperor, who was proud of being considered a patron of literature. During his reign lived many of the greatest Roman writers, so that "the Augustan age" has now come to be the name given to that period in the history of any country when literature and learning

Death of Virgil, 19 B.C. were at their greatest perfection. Very little is known of the events of Virgil's life; most likely they were few. He died in the year 19 B.C., and was buried at Naples.

Virgil's best-known, though perhaps not his greatest, poem is the *Æneid*, the story of Æneas, a Trojan prince, who escaped from Troy when it was taken by the Greeks. You will remember that "Æneid." Homer's poem, the *Iliad*, was all about the siege of Troy. Well, Virgil takes up the story where Homer left it, and describes to us "Troy's last agony"—the taking and burning of the city by the Greeks.

Ten years had come and gone since first the Greeks drew up their fleet upon the Trojan shore, and still the Greek ships lay high and dry upon the beach, and still the Greek tents were pitched upon the plain beneath the walls of Troy. Many brave men, both Greeks and Trojans, had fallen in fight, amongst them the noblest of all the Trojans—Hector, the son of King Priam, slain by the hand of swift-footed Achilles. At length a Greek called Sinon allowed himself to be taken prisoner by the Trojans, pretending that he was flying from his

countrymen, who, he said, wished to sacrifice him to the goddess Minerva, who was believed to be angry with them. Well, the Trojans believed him, and were persuaded by him to receive into the city a huge wooden horse, which was hollow, and was filled with armed Greeks, though the Trojans did not know that. Then at night, when the city was sunk in sleep, the treacherous Sinon opened a door in the wooden horse, and the men within it poured out and fell upon the sentinels and slew them; and afterwards they unfastened the city gates, and all the Greeks trooped in.

A terrible scene of bloodshed followed. In his poem Virgil makes the Trojan chief, Æneas, describe how he awoke out of sleep and found the city in a state of indescribable horror. Many houses were blazing, corpses lay scattered in the streets and on the steps of houses, while the groans of the wounded, the shouts of the fighters, and the blare of trumpets mingled together in deafening confusion. Æneas made his way to the palace; and there he tells how he found the queen and her many daughters and daughters-in-law huddled together round the altar in the inner court, "like pigeons flying before a lowering storm," while King Priam has buckled on with trembling, aged fingers his long-unused armour, and is eager to rush out into the thickest of the fight. But, alas, it is not to be! The brave old king is slain before his own altar, and under the eyes of wife and daughters. When Æneas sees him fall a great horror seizes him, as he thinks that perhaps by this time his own old father, who is about the age of the king, may be, like Priam, lying slain in his blood. So he sets out to find him.

**Destruction  
of Troy.**

As he makes his way to his home, hoping yet fearing to see his father Anchises, he passes the temple of the

goddess Vesta, and there he sees Helen—the Greek Helen, Helen of Troy—she who was the cause of all these years of siege and suffering to the Trojans, and of this terrible ruin of their city. She is cowering down in a corner by the altar, trying to hide herself, for she has nothing to hope for from Greek or Trojan. Both are her enemies; for has she not forsaken and betrayed her countrymen, and brought destruction on Troy which sheltered her? When the eyes of Æneas fall upon her, a great rage lays hold of him, and, woman though she be, he would fall upon her and slay her. But at that moment there appears before him his mother, the goddess Venus (for Æneas is the son of a goddess, though his father is a mortal), who bids him take his father, his son, and what followers he can, and set sail to a new country which shall be given to him, his children, and grandchildren for ever.

So Æneas makes his way by by-paths out of the blazing city, bearing his aged father on his back, leading his little son Ascanius by the hand, and followed by his wife Creusa, a daughter of King Priam. When he reached the place of safety, where he had told his comrades to meet him, he found all gathered together—all save one, his wife Creusa. Leaving his father and son in the care of his trusty followers, Æneas in great distress returns to the city to seek her; but in vain he searches amid the smoking ruins, in vain he calls aloud her name—no dear wife comes to him. But at length, when he has almost given up the search in despair, the ghost of Creusa (for she is dead) appears before him, and bids him seek her no more, nor lament too much her loss, but to set sail at once for Italy, where a new home and a new bride, the daughter of a king, are awaiting him. Then, while vainly Æneas tries to clasp her in his

longing arms, she disappears, "light as the wind or like a swiftly-passing dream."

I have not space to tell you the story of Æneas's long wanderings—how he is tossed upon the sea for many years, and suffers shipwreck and other misfortunes and trials. But at length he reached Italy, and there he married Lavinia, the daughter of a Latin king; and there, after generations of his grandchildren had passed away, there sprang up a new and greater Troy—the city of Rome, named from its first king, Romulus, who called Trojan Æneas his ancestor.



COIN OF OCTAVIANUS.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HYPATIA—THE DECAY OF GREEK CIVILIZATION.

**T**HE reign of Augustus, the first emperor of Rome, was on the whole a time of peace and of prosperity for the great city; but nevertheless it was the beginning of the end of Roman greatness. The Roman people had lost their old ideal; they had no longer the freedom of their state at heart; they were no longer willing to sacrifice life and happiness, or even ease and comfort, to secure it. The wealth, too, that poured into Rome from the various conquered countries helped to weaken and corrupt the people. Year by year they became more fond of ease and splendour and luxury; year by year they became less willing to work, or to exert themselves in any way—even to fight for their own country; and as there was plenty of money to hire other people to fight for them, they began to think that it was altogether beneath the dignity of a free-born Roman citizen to do so himself. For they became proud and haughty, as well as idle and luxurious.

Still, though not in true greatness, Rome continued to grow in *size* even after the reign of Augustus, until, as I have told you already, it stretched over all the world—all the world, that is, which was known at the time; for it was not till long after the fall of the Roman



empire that America and Australia were discovered. For centuries, a Roman governor ruled in our own island of Britain, as well as in countries even more distant from Rome.

I am going to pass over the first four hundred years of the Christian era. The history of that time is not pleasant to read: it is full of the accounts of petty wars with uncivilized peoples, which could bring no glory to the Roman conquerors; of the fierce struggles by which one ambitious man after another raised himself to the throne; and of the treachery and crimes by which one emperor after another kept himself on it. For though some of the emperors were good, well-meaning men, most of them were as wicked and cruel as they could be.

State of  
Rome  
during the  
first four  
centuries  
of the  
Christian  
era.

It was in the reign of the first emperor, Augustus, that there happened the most important event in the history of the world—the birth of our Lord. When, many years after it, the Christian religion began to spread in Rome, it gave a good opportunity to some of the wicked emperors of showing their cruelty and brutality; and many were the Christian men and women who were put to death by horrible torture because they would not give up their faith. There is a story that the Emperor Nero (54–68 A.D.)—one of the most cruel and wicked men who ever lived—once set fire to Rome, that he might have the pleasure of seeing how Troy looked in flames, and afterwards accused the Christians in the city of having done it. He then ordered several of them to be seized and put to death in the most inhuman way: some were wrapped in the skins of wild beasts, and were then hunted and torn to pieces by dogs; and others were

Persecution  
of the early  
Christians.

covered with pitch and then set on fire in the gardens of the emperor's palace, while the emperor and his wicked friends looked on in amusement. During the times of the emperors, the Romans, who had got to hate work and fighting, were very fond of shows of all sorts; and they had a huge circus built, called the Colosseum, the ruins of which are still standing in Rome. Here the Christians who would not renounce their religion were sometimes made to fight on the stage with wild beasts, for the amusement of the Romans, who sat and looked on in safety, sometimes applauding and sometimes hissing.

But at last, in the fourth century A.C., one of the emperors, Constantine, became a Christian himself, in consequence, it is said, of having seen the appearance of a cross in the sun; and in 313 A.D. he proclaimed that every one was to be free to worship in any way he liked; and the Christians were allowed to get back again the land and money which had been taken from them. It was not very long afterwards, in 325 A.D., that the great conference of Christian clergy, the Council of Nicæa, was held.

After Constantine's proclamation, hundreds of people became Christians; but though they believed in the Christian religion, they were still, at least many of them, far from possessing the gentle, forgiving spirit of their great Master, as you will see when I tell you the story of Hypatia. Before I pass on to it, however, I should like to mention here that the same emperor Constantine removed his seat of empire from Rome to Byzantium, a town on the shores of the Bosphorus, the strait between the Sea

of Marmora and the Black Sea. This town he greatly enlarged and improved, naming it in honour of himself Constantinople, by which name it is known to this day. When, not very long after the time of Constantine, the Roman empire, grown too large for one king to rule over it, was divided into two—the empire of the East and the empire of the West—Constantinople became the capital of the eastern, while Rome remained the seat of the western empire.

Division  
of the  
Roman  
empire.

It was about the end of the fourth century A.C. that Hypatia was born at Alexandria. I have already told you that Alexander the Great of Macedon founded a town in Egypt, which he called after himself Alexandria, so that it was more than six hundred years old when Hypatia was born there. At that time, as it had been for centuries, it was one of the most celebrated and most important towns in the world. If you will look at it on your map, you will see that it held a very important position. It was on the way between Europe and India; for at that time people always went from Europe to India by the Red Sea, and it was a central meeting-place for merchants from Europe, Asia, and Africa. There the merchants of India would exchange for Roman money their rich silks and perfumes and precious stones, which were afterwards to adorn the proud, luxurious Roman ladies.

Birth of  
Hypatia.

But Alexandria was a great centre not only of commerce but also of learning. After the fall of Greece, it was at Alexandria that learned men from all parts of the world gathered, attracted no doubt by the splendid library which the city contained. During the first three centuries after its foundation, the city was the capital of the kingdom of the Ptolemies—the descend-

ants of Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, who, on the death of Alexander, became king of Egypt; but in the reign of Augustus, Egypt became a province of Rome.

Hypatia was the daughter of Theon, a great mathematician. When she was a girl, she showed  
 Hypatia studies at so much talent that her father sent her to  
 Athens. Athens to study; and there she learned to love with all her heart beautiful Greece and everything Greek—above all, Greek learning. Now, at that time (more than half a century after Constantine's celebrated proclamation of liberty to the Christians), the Christian religion had come to be the religion of the great Roman empire; but, though Christians in name, the people were still far from understanding the true meaning of Christianity, and they often did as wicked, cruel things to the Pagans, as the followers of the old Greek and Roman religion were called, as their Pagan fathers and grandfathers had done to the Christians. Amongst  
 Destruction of Greek works of art by the early Christians. other acts of these early Christians was the destruction of many of the beautiful buildings and works of art of the Greeks. We hear of bands of monks in the fourth century wandering about from place to place tearing down and destroying whatever treasure of Greek art or learning they could lay hands on. They were foolish enough to think that it was doing God a service to do away with every trace of the genius of Greece, to efface, over the wide empire of Rome, the footsteps of Beauty—the spirit which God had sent into the world to prepare the way for the coming of his Son.

You can well imagine how the heart of Hypatia, in which the dying Greek spirit was still alive and strong in all its beauty, must have swelled to bursting when

she heard of deeds like these. Hypatia was not a Christian. Very likely the fierce zeal and destructive acts of those well-meaning but foolish monks would prejudice her against the religion of which they were the professed followers, and prevent her from giving serious attention to the Christian Bible. At any rate, she remained through life what she had been brought up—a Pagan.

When she returned to her native city from Athens, accomplished in all the learning of the Greeks, and with a heart aglow with reverence for all that was great and beautiful and noble in ancient Greece, she began to give lectures on science and philosophy, which were attended by many of the learned men of Alexandria. It was not only her learning which drew people to her lectures. We are told that she was remarkably beautiful, amiable, and attractive; and Orestes, the governor of Alexandria, had such a high opinion of her wisdom, that he would often consult her on matters concerning the government of the city.

For some years after her return home, Hypatia seems to have led a peaceful life, occupied in thinking, in reading her beloved old Greek philosophers, and in teaching, till about 412 A.D., when a new bishop, or patriarch as he was called, was appointed to Alexandria. This was Cyril, a zealous but fierce Christian, possessing none of that gentle, forgiving spirit which ought to be characteristic of all true followers of Christ, and hating “heretics” with an intense hatred which often led him to commit acts of cruelty. Between the bishop and the governor, the friend of Hypatia, there seems to have been a strong feeling of jealousy, which broke out some three years or



so after the appointment of Cyril, when there arose a dispute between them.

Almost ever since the foundation of Alexandria, a very large number of Jews had lived in the city. They were peaceful citizens enough; but Cyril could not endure that the people who had crucified Christ should dwell in a Christian city of which he was bishop, so he asked the governor to send them away. Orestes consulted Hypatia, and, acting on her advice, refused to grant the bishop's request. Cyril was very angry at this refusal, and the wrath of his zealous followers rose to such a height that they were carried on to commit an act that is one of the very foulest blots on the history of the Christian Church.

As Hypatia was driving in her chariot one day through the well-known streets, on her way to give her usual lecture, her mind probably pondering on some deep thought of Plato or Aristotle, and heeding little what was around her, her chariot was suddenly stopped and surrounded by a hooting, hissing rabble. Starting up, Hypatia gazed around her in amazement on the sea of furious faces, and on the fierce eyes that glared with hatred upon her. In her clear accents, full of a gentle and calm dignity, she tried to soothe the excited mob; but her words were drowned in loud shouts of—"Down with Pagans! Down with Jews! To the church with her!"

Then the beautiful, unoffending woman was roughly dragged by dozens of rude hands to a church

Death of

Hypatia,

415 A.D.

—a Christian church!—that stood near.

There, before the altar sacred to the God of mercy, they stripped her and tore her limb from limb—cut her to pieces with oyster-shells, one writer says.

So perished Hypatia, the last of the Greeks; she in



whom the Greek spirit may be said to have died, or rather to have fallen asleep, only to awake again, with new beauty and strength, in what is called the Renaissance. The classical period is now at an end: the learning of Greece and the power of Rome have each done what they could to civilize and raise mankind. It remains for the religion of purity and love to complete what they have begun.



ALEXANDRIA.  
(*Museum Florentinum.*)

## PART II.

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### *FROM THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE OF THE WEST TO THE REFORMATION.*

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### KING ARTHUR—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SAXONS IN BRITAIN.

WE are now going to pass over into our own island of Britain. I have told you that for centuries it was part of the great Roman empire, ruled by a Roman governor, and garrisoned by a Roman army. The first description which we have of the island and of its people, too, was written by a Roman—the great Julius Cæsar, who, you will remember, came over to Britain and conquered some of the native tribes in 55 B.C., though it was not till a century later that the country became a Roman province.

	At the time when Cæsar came over, the inhabitants
Description of the ancient Britons.	of Britain, or the Britons as they were called,
	were little better than savages, living in mud
	huts, and clothed in the skins of beasts; but
	during the three hundred and more years that
	they were under the rule of Roman governors, they
	learned a great many useful arts from their
Effect of the Roman con- quest.	conquerors—they learned to read and to
	write, to build stone houses, to weave, and to

make roads. Many of them, too, became Christians at this time. Altogether, the conquest of Britain by the civilized people of Rome turned out to be a very good thing for the conquered people, though it was not easy for them to believe that at first, and many times some chief or other bolder than the rest rose up in arms to try to free his country from the invader.

Meantime, as we have seen, the great empire of Rome was drawing near its end. Though I have made the classical period end with Hypatia (who is indeed the last representative of the purely classical spirit), the Roman empire of the West, of which the city of Rome was the capital, continued to exist, though in a tottering condition, for sixty years after her death, till 476 A.D. Then the last emperor, who, strangely enough, had the same name as the founder of the city—Romulus—was deposed by the chief of a German tribe named Odoacer, who, with many of his followers, had fought his way to Rome.

**Fall of the  
Empire of  
the West,  
476 A.D.**

The last century or more of the existence of the Roman empire of the West is remarkable chiefly on account of the inroads from the north and east of great crowds of rude tribes—Goths and Vandals they were called—who pressed towards Rome. These people, like the tribe that deposed the last emperor of the West, seem to have been related to the Germans. In the fourth century, another and more terrible people came into Europe from Asia—the Huns. They are described as little, dark, deformed men, of ferocious cruelty and quite uncivilized manners, who had no settled dwellings, but wandered about with their flocks and herds from place to place, spreading terror wherever they went. When these people entered Europe, the Goths, who were living

**Inroads of  
Goths.**

**The Huns.**

in the country about the river Danube, were driven from their homes, and, led by the brave Alaric, advanced westwards with their wives and children, their flocks and their herds.

Twice before her final fall, the great city of Rome, the Mistress of the World, as she used to be called,

**Rome besieged by Gothic chiefs.** suffered the disgrace of being besieged and taken by a Gothic chief—a mere barbarian! It was then (in the first half of the fifth century A.C.) that the Romans found it necessary to recall

**Recall of Roman troops from the provinces.**

their troops from their more distant provinces in order to help to guard their capital itself from the attacks of the barbarians. Like other countries, Britain was delivered from its Roman garrison and governor. But the state

of Britain was not by any means improved by the removal of the Roman troops. The Britons, or at least those living in that part of the island which is now called England (for the Romans never conquered the whole of Scotland), had become civilized during the centuries that the Romans had governed them, and they had been so long at peace that they had almost forgotten how to fight, so that they were easy to conquer by people accustomed to fight. Even before the Romans left the island, great bands of the wild Scots would often swoop down upon the Roman province from the north, and do a great deal of mischief, killing and burning and plundering; while the coasts of the island were frequently attacked by the ships of the Saxons—a rude tribe from the north of Germany. But no sooner were the Romans safely out of the way, than the attacks of the Scots increased so much that the Britons of the south felt quite unable to resist them, and looked about for some one to help them. It is said that a

British king, Vortigern, was foolish enough to ask the Saxons to come and assist him against the Scots, and that two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, came with an army and conquered these wild northerners.

But the Britons had only got rid of one enemy to fall into the hands of a worse one; for when the Saxons saw what a good country Britain was, and how weak its people were, they told their friends in Germany to come over; and soon the unfortunate country was overrun by hosts of fierce Germans—Angles and Saxons and Jutes—who drove the poor Britons into the mountains of Wales and Cornwall and Scotland, where their descendants live to this day, many of them still speaking a Celtic language—Welsh in Wales, or Gaelic in the Scottish Highlands.

Before they were fairly conquered, however, you may be sure that many of the bravest British chiefs did their best to save their country from falling into the hands of the fierce Saxons. And the bravest of them all—the one who fought the hardest and the most nobly for his country—was Arthur, the king of a British tribe on the borders of Wales, who lived about the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century. There is not much about Arthur in history—some historians believe that he was not a *real* person at all—but there is a great deal about him in old tales and ballads; and our late great poet, Tennyson, has made him the hero of several of his grandest poems. In the first of his poems about Arthur, *The Coming of Arthur*, Tennyson gives a very vivid description of the state of Britain after the Romans left it. He tells us how the civilized peace-loving Britons

Saxons in  
Britain,  
449 A.D.

Tennyson's  
"Coming of  
Arthur."

“Groaned for the Roman legions here again,  
And Cæsar’s eagle.....  
And still from time to time the heathen host  
Swarmed over seas and harried what was left.  
And so there grew great tracts of wilderness,  
Wherein the beast was ever more and more,  
But man was less and less, till Arthur came.”

I do not suppose the real Arthur, if he ever lived, was half such a fine man as Tennyson makes him. He was surrounded by a great many knights, noble, brave young men, who had vowed with a solemn oath

“To reverence the king as if he were  
Their conscience, and their conscience as their king,  
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ,  
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs,  
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it,  
To honour his own word as if his God’s.”

But noble as the knights were, none of them could compare with Arthur, God’s “highest creature here”—the noblest, purest, grandest character you can imagine.

The old poets have woven a great deal of mystery about the coming of Arthur—his birth and proclamation as king—which we cannot believe now-a-days, but which is very beautiful to read about. One story is that, as the old Welsh magician Merlin stood one night on the sea-shore, a wave washed to his feet an infant, who was no other than the future king Arthur. Merlin took the babe and brought him up in solitude; and after many years, when the child grew up to manhood, he came forth before the world and made himself king. At first a great many people would not acknowledge him as king; but after he had done several noble deeds, and had many times conquered the heathen Saxons in fight, people believed in him, and he drew around him many noble followers.



Then he formed his brave band of knights, each of whom had to take the oath I told you of before he could become one of the band. They were called The Knights of the the Knights of the Round Table, because the of the king, not wishing to honour one more than Round Table. another, or to set one before another, had a large round table made, at which the knights sat at meals, so that no one should have a higher place than his brother knights.

So for some years the Christian knights, led by their noble king, waged a brave war against the heathen host of the Angles and Saxons; and many a glorious battle did they win. But gradually, as the years went on, the knights died one by one, or fell away from their allegiance to Arthur, or quarrelled among themselves, and at length one forgot so far the oath he had sworn as to go against the king whom he had vowed to reverence as his conscience. Then Arthur went forth to meet him, not joyfully, as in the olden days when, with his goodly company of knights, he met the Saxon hosts upon the field, but sadly; for, as he said,—

“The king who fights his people fights himself.  
And they my knights, who loved me once, the stroke  
That strikes them dead is as my death to me.”

All day long the battle raged, and when evening came the remnant of the knights had fallen “man by man about their lord;” only Sir Bedivere, the first of all the knights, was left.

He, when the king too fell wounded on the field, raised him on his shoulders, and bore him to a ruined chapel. Then Arthur, feeling that The “Passing of Arthur.” death was near, put into his last knight’s hands his sword Excalibur, and bade him fling it into the

lake near by, and "lightly bring him word" of what he saw. For the story runs that the sword was the gift of the mystic Lady of the Lake; that when first he became king, Arthur had seen an arm, "clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful," arise from out the bosom of the lake, holding a sword, whose hilt glittered with diamonds. Then Arthur (so they said) rowed out into the lake and took the sword, which was a marvel of workmanship. And on the blade on one side were the words, "Take me;" but on the other, "Throw me away!"

And now the time had come to throw Excalibur away. So bold Sir Bedivere took the sword as he was bid; but when he came to the margin of the lake, and drew forth the sword to fling it, the jewels of the hilt sparkled so in the moonlight that he could not find it in his heart to do what he had come to do. Instead, he hid Excalibur among the sedges of the lake; and to King Arthur's questions of what he had seen or heard, answered,—

"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,  
And the wild water lapping on the crag."

Then Arthur was angry at this disobedience of his knight, and sent him forth again to hurl the sword into the lake. But again the wondrous beauty of the sword so worked upon the knight that he could not fling it away. Again he hid it in the reeds, and returning, told the king.

"I heard the water lapping on the crag,  
And the long ripple washing in the reeds."

Then great was the anger of the dying king, and so bitterly he rebuked the knight that Bedivere arose in haste and ran, and took the sword, and with shut eyes flung it into the lake. Then back he came to Arthur,

who, breathing heavily—for his end was near—said to him,—

“Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.  
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard or seen?”

So Bedivere told how he had hurled the sword with closed eyes, not trusting himself to look upon it; and how when he looked again he saw an arm, “clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,” that took Excalibur, and three times brandished it, and drew it under the water. Then, at the bidding of his king, Sir Bedivere bore his helpless body to the margin of the lake; and soon there hove in sight a barge, “dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,” and in it were three queens with golden crowns and mourning garments. Sadly Sir Bedivere placed the wounded king within the barge, as he was bid to do, and then swiftly and silently it glided out of sight into the darkness.

Such is the tale that poets tell. I cannot say that it is true; but this at least we will believe, that centuries ago, when the power of Rome had fallen, there lived in our own land, and fought against the hosts of heathen Angles and Saxons, a noble Christian king—King Arthur. And not in vain he fought, although he was not able to drive the heathen from the country which bears their name to-day—*England*, the land of the *Angles*.



## CHAPTER II.

### CHARLEMAGNE—THE SECOND EMPIRE OF THE WEST.

FROM the fall of the first Roman empire of the West to the foundation of the second by Charlemagne in 800 A.D., the history of Europe is chiefly an account of the fights of the savage tribes of Goths and Lombards and Saxons and Franks, their settlement in the various countries of western Europe, and their gradual conversion to Christianity. Much that is most interesting gathers round the lives of the saints—the good men and women who, like Augustine and Columba in our own country, did their best to teach the gospel of Christ to the heathen tribes among whom they lived. During these three centuries most of the Saxons in Britain became Christians; but they were still very rude and uncivilized, and often at war with each other (for there were still several kings ruling in England).

One great power still remained in Europe—the Roman empire of the East, of which Constantinople was the capital; but it was slowly passing into decay, and I do not think there is much in its history at this time which you would find interesting, or which it is important for you to know. One thing, however, which it is well to know about it is, that twice dur-

ing this period Constantinople was besieged (though not taken) by the Arabs, a people who rose to great importance during the seventh century, and of whom you shall hear more again.

Constanti-  
nople  
besieged by  
Arabs, 668  
and 716 A.D.

Meantime in Italy one rude Teutonic or German tribe followed on the footsteps of another. Odoacer, the German chief who had deposed the last emperor of Rome, was himself put to death by the Ostrogoths (East-Goths), who ruled in Italy for about sixty years. Afterwards, in 568, the Lombards or Longobards, who came from about the centre of Germany, conquered Italy, where twenty-one Lombard kings bore sway until the kingdom was finally overthrown by Charlemagne.

The Ostro-  
goths in  
Italy.

The Lom-  
bards in  
Italy, 568-  
774 A.D.

Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, was by race a Frank. The Franks, when first we hear of them, were a tribe of people dwelling on the east bank of the Rhine; but afterwards they conquered the country which was then called Gaul, but has since been called, from the name of its conquerors, France.

Conquest of  
Gaul by  
the Franks.

The grandfather of Charlemagne, whose name was also Charles, was a very brave and skilful warrior, and was given the surname of *Martel*, or the Hammer, in consequence of the way in which he beat the Arabs at the battle of Tours in 732—one of the most important battles that had been fought for centuries. The Arabs had conquered Spain early in the eighth century, and would no doubt have conquered France too, if Charles Martel had not met and defeated them at Tours so completely that never again did they venture to enter France.

Battle of  
Tours,  
732 A.D.

Charles Martel was not king of the Franks, but only the mayor of the palace, or the chief officer of the king; but his son Pepin, the father of Charlemagne, became king with the consent of the Pope, and on his death his son ruled in his stead.

Charlemagne was born in 742. When he was a boy he was not sent to school, as all boys are now-a-days.

Birth of  
Charle-  
magne,  
742 A.D.

After the fall of Rome the schools had been mostly destroyed by the attacks of the various heathen tribes that invaded the empire, and for centuries—centuries known as the Dark Ages—learning was almost forgotten, except by a few Greeks in Constantinople, or by a solitary monk here and there. But though he was not taught from books, he was taught the various arts of war; and while quite a boy he accompanied his father, who was himself a brave soldier and a skilful statesman, on a great expedition against the Lombards in Italy, and thus had an early experience of actual warfare.

It was in return for his services against the Lombards that the pope consented to make Pepin king of the Franks. Charlemagne was only a boy of about twelve when, with solemn pomp and ceremony, his father was anointed king, and he himself was baptized, by the pope's own hands at Münster, a town which you will still see marked in the map of North Germany. You can imagine what a deep impression the scene must have made on the boy's imagination, and how often afterwards he must have dreamed of the time when he himself should be king, and of all the great things that he would do.

Pepin  
anointed  
king.

Pepin, as you will have seen, was a Christian, and looked upon himself as the champion of the pope and of Christianity against the different heathen tribes.



When Charlemagne grew up and became king, which he did in 768, at the age of twenty-six, he too made it one of his greatest aims to defend and extend Christianity wherever he could, and to conquer the heathen whom he could not convert. He had not been very long king when he led his army against the Saxons, a wild people in the north of Germany, numbers of whom, as we have seen, had gone over to Britain more than three centuries before, and were now masters there. The object of this war, as Charlemagne himself declared, was to convert the heathen to Christianity, "the true and saving faith." To us now-a-days it seems a very strange thing that any one should have thought of preaching the gospel of peace with the edge of the sword; but Charlemagne, great though he was, did not understand fully the true meaning of the religion of which he professed himself a follower, any more than did the fierce rabble who tore Hypatia limb from limb in Alexandria more than three hundred years before. The ugliest blot on the memory of Charlemagne is an act of cruelty which he committed upon these poor Saxons, who, if they were fierce and rude and uncultured, showed great courage in the way in which they fought and struggled for their freedom against the power of the great king. For thirty years the struggle lasted, during which time again and again the Saxons were defeated, and they rose up again and again after Charlemagne thought they were finally settled. At last on one occasion he had hardly left their country, after making arrangements for peace with them, when he heard that they had again risen in rebellion. In great anger at this breach of the treaty just made, he hastened back and ordered about four thousand prisoners, who refused to

Charle-  
magne be-  
comes king,  
768 A.D.

His wars  
with the  
Saxons.

become Christians, to be put to death. Even after that, the Saxons rose against him again under their brave leader Wittikind; but they were finally defeated, and Wittikind and his wife were obliged to be baptized and to adopt the Christian religion. Then Charlemagne, in order to divide the people, took great numbers of them from their homes, and sent them to other parts of his empire; and he was never troubled by them again.

But you must not suppose that during all these thirty years Charlemagne was fighting only with the Saxons. During that time the great kingdom which his father had left had grown on all sides. In 774, at the request of the pope, whom the Lombards had attacked, he had entered Italy, besieged the king of the Lombards in Pavia, south of Milan, and completely conquered him, after which all that large part of Italy which had belonged to the Lombards for more than two hundred years became part of his empire, and he was acknowledged as chief over the whole of northern Italy.

Conquest  
of the  
Lombards,  
774 A.D.

Four years later, some Christian chiefs in Spain begged him to come and help them against the Arabs, or Moors as they were called, who, as I told you, had conquered that country about half-a-century before. So Charlemagne got together his army, and accompanied by some of his brave paladins, as his chief nobles were called, he set out for Spain. They crossed the Pyrenees, the high mountains which, as you know, separate France from Spain, and made their way as far as the river Ebro, conquering all who opposed them. But on their journey homewards a very sad event happened, which became the favourite subject for the songs of poets centuries afterwards.

Expedition  
into Spain,  
778.

This was the death of young Roland, the nephew of Charlemagne, and the noblest of his paladins.

As the story goes (but I must warn you that this is not *history*), the army of Charlemagne, in a long column, was making its way homewards through a narrow pass in the Pyrenees called Roncesvalles—Roland, who had command of the rear-guard, being far behind the front ranks, where Charlemagne himself rode. Now a wicked traitor, who hated Roland for some reason or other, had told the enemy how the French army was returning; so, when Charlemagne and the main body of the army were well in front, suddenly Roland with his small rear-guard was attacked by thousands of armed men. For a long time the small band of the Franks defended themselves with the greatest bravery, and thousands of the enemy fell around them. Roland had a wonderful horn, which could be heard for miles away; but he would not blow it until he saw that all was lost. Then he blew a long clear note, which echoed among the hills, and reached the ears of Charlemagne himself. But the traitor, Ganelon, was with him, and persuaded him that the sound he heard was not the horn of Roland, but something else. Then again Roland blew his horn, again the great leader heard and would have turned back, but again the traitor persuaded him to advance. Then Roland blew with all the strength that remained to him, till his cheeks were nearly bursting and the veins rose big and swollen on his brow; and so loud and strong was the note he blew that this time Charlemagne knew he was not mistaken, and hastened back, only to find his brave paladin and all his followers lying dead. But terrible was the vengeance which he took upon the foe—so runs the story.

But I do not wish to write of nothing but battles,

or I might tell you of another great expedition which Charlemagne led against some savage tribes dwelling in the country about the Danube; and how he planned and at once set men to work at a canal between this great river and the river Maine. If you will consult your map of Europe, you will see that this canal would connect the Black Sea and the Mediterranean with the North Sea; and you can well imagine how it would have helped to bring the different countries he had conquered into one united kingdom if it had been completed. But it never was. I think this scheme of the canal helps us to understand better than anything else he did in his life what was the dream of Charlemagne. His dream was, I think, the union of all the countries he had conquered—of all the heathen tribes that for centuries had been constantly at war with one another—into one great empire, the new Empire of the West, in which the power and the learning of ancient Rome should be united with the religion of Christ.

This dream must have seemed to be realized when, on Christmas-day of the year 800, in a church in Rome in which the sacred day was being celebrated with all pomp and magnificence, the pope brought forth a crown and placed it on the head of Charlemagne, hailing him as “Emperor of Rome,” while hundreds of voices with loud shouts re-echoed the words. So in the city where Julius Cæsar had fallen a sacrifice to liberty, a barbarian and a Christian assumed the crown which Cæsar’s fellow-citizens would not let him wear. The Roman Empire of the West, which had fallen more than three hundred years before, was now restored.

The remaining fourteen years of his life Charlemagne

spent chiefly in strengthening the boundaries of his empire (in particular he placed forts along the coast-line, to protect the empire from the invasions of the Normans and the Danes, which had already begun), in trying to spread among his subjects a knowledge of the arts of peace, in founding schools, and in encouraging learning by every means in his power. Learned men from all countries were invited to settle in the empire ; and one in particular, the great English scholar Alcuin, was persuaded to be for years the tutor of the emperor and his family.

Scarcely a year before his death, Charlemagne, feeling that he had become old and feeble, resolved to make his son Louis (the only son left to him) his colleague in the empire. There was a solemn scene one Sunday in the grand cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle, when the aged emperor publicly declared his resolution, and earnestly reminded his son of the duties of a good sovereign, bidding him put the crown on his head.

Charlemagne  
makes his  
son his  
colleague.

After that he retired from public life, living quietly at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he died in 814. His last words were, "Now, Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

His death,  
814 A.D.



CHARLEMAGNE.



## CHAPTER III.

### ROLLO—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE NORMANS IN FRANCE.

YOU have heard a good deal lately about the northern tribes of Europe—the Goths, the Saxons, and the Franks. Now I am going to tell you about another northern people of whom we read a great deal during the centuries following the time of Charlemagne—the Northmen, or Danes, or Scandinavians, as they are indifferently called.

At the time we first hear of them, they were living in the northern peninsula of Europe, which is divided into the countries of Sweden and Norway. But  
Description of the Northmen. they were not all stay-at-homes, those old Northmen; they were always sailing forth on exploring or plundering expeditions in their little vessels, which were often made of the trunk of a single tree hollowed out. In these little ships they could sail far up quite a shallow creek or river, and so get well within the coast of any country they wanted to attack and plunder. In consequence of their habit of attacking countries in this way, or perhaps because the coast of their own country is so full of creeks or *fiords*, they were often called *Vikings*, or creek-men.

They were a tall, strong, manly race, fair-haired and blue-eyed, with a natural love of adventure, and a spirit of daring which, together with their great bodily strength,



enabled them to endure hardships better than other men. Many are the wonderful tales we can read in the old Norse ballads of the deeds of some viking hero or other, who set forth with a few followers to discover new lands, fight strange people, and bring home rich plunder to his bleak northern country. Although their ships were such wretched things compared with the splendid vessels which sail our seas now-a-days, there is no doubt that they discovered Greenland as early as the ninth century; and there is good reason for believing that several centuries before Columbus made his celebrated voyage (as early as the second or third year of the eleventh century), more than one small expedition of Norsemen landed on the coast of America, which they called Vinland, or vine-land, in consequence of finding grapes growing in the country. But as they did not found a colony there, the other peoples of Europe did not know anything about their discoveries, and it is only in old Icelandic books that we read about them. At a much earlier period they had colonized Iceland and our own islands of Orkney and Shetland, which they ruled over for many centuries. In the eighth century they began to attack the coasts of England and France; and we have seen that the mighty Charlemagne was obliged to build forts to protect his empire from their attacks. In England, from the end of the eighth to the middle of the eleventh century, these wild sea-rovers caused great trouble, overrunning the country and fighting the inhabitants. Even Alfred the Great, who from 871 till 901 was king in England, could for long do nothing against the invaders, and was obliged to hide from them, though

Discovery  
of Green-  
land and  
America.

Coloniza-  
tion of Ice-  
land and  
the Ork-  
neys and  
Shetlands by  
Norsemen.

Invasions  
of England  
by the  
Northmen.

afterwards he overcame them in many battles, and finally made peace with them. Later on, England was ruled for thirty years by Danish or Norse kings; and finally, in 1066, it was conquered by a descendant of these old vikings—William the Conqueror.

In France, after the death of Charlemagne, the attacks of the Northmen became much bolder and more frequent than they had been during his life. His son, Louis le Débonnaire, or Louis the Good-natured, was a very weak man; and during his lifetime his own sons deposed him. Afterwards they quarrelled among themselves

**Battle of  
Fontenay  
and treaty  
of Verdun,  
843 A.D.**

about who was to have the empire, and a terrible battle was fought between them at Fontenay. But in the end they agreed to sign the treaty of Verdun in 843, by which the empire was divided among them. So only

about thirty years after the death of Charlemagne, the empire of the West, which it had been the dream of his life to found, was broken up. For a few years, later in the same century, it was again united under one ruler, Charles the Fat; but as he was a very weak man, it was again dissolved, and this time for ever. France and Germany were never again united.

Of course, the Northmen took advantage of these

**Invasions  
of France.**

divisions and battles among the French, to become more daring in their attacks on France. At different times during the ninth

century they sailed up the Loire, the Garonne, and the Seine, killing and plundering and burning; and in 885 they besieged Paris, and reduced the inhabitants to great suffering.

**Siege of  
Paris,  
885 A.D.**

It was in the reign of Charles the Simple that Rollo made his way to France. Rollo, or Hrolf, or Rou as he is called in France, was

**Rollo.**

the son of a Scandinavian *jarl* or earl. We are told by a Scandinavian writer that he "was a famous vikingr, and so stout that no horse could carry him. He was therefore obliged to go on foot, and thence was called Ganngo-Rólfr (Rollo the Walker)." When he was a young man, he left his home, and sailed about the seas, living the life of an adventurer and pirate, like many other young Northmen of good birth. Now, at that time the king of Norway, Harald Harfager, wanted to put a stop to this habit of the young Northmen of becoming pirates; and he therefore made strict laws against it. As Rollo broke these laws, the king solemnly ordered him to be banished for life from his native land.

Well, Rollo gathered round him a band of bold young men like himself, and set sail from the country to which he was never to return, after no doubt parting sadly from his mother, who had done her best, with prayers and tears, to induce the stern king not to send her son away. The company of adventurers landed at Rouen in France, and laid waste the country round about. Then they sailed up the river Seine; and Charles the Simple advanced to meet them with a large army. When he reached the neighbourhood of the Normans, he sent ambassadors to them who could speak their language, and who asked them why they had come into France. "To conquer it," was the answer. Then the ambassadors asked if they would not rather become vassals of King Charles; and the whole band shouted with one voice, "No!"

Rollo leaves  
his country  
and goes  
to France.

So there was a battle fought, in which the French were completely defeated and took to flight. After that, the Normans advanced still further into France, and wherever they fought they were victorious. After

laying waste a great deal of the country, Rollo retired to Rouen, where he was chosen as chief by his comrades, and where he began to settle and order his colony. Now he began to appear in quite a different character from the rude, savage sea-rover that he was at first. We hear that, though he was a pagan and a foreigner, he was such a mild, though firm, ruler that crowds of Christians of the country gathered round him.

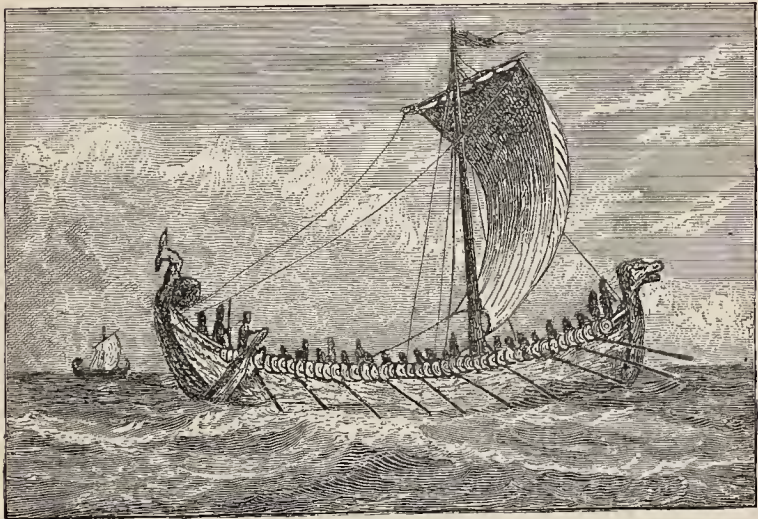
For seven years we do not hear much of him ; but in 911 he planned an expedition of all his people up the great rivers, into the centre of France. When Charles the Simple heard of the advance of the Normans, he was greatly alarmed, and offered to make peace with Rollo, promising to give him and his heirs that part of France which is now called Normandy. Rollo accepted the offer ; and he with his followers met the king and all his nobles to take the necessary oaths. It is said that when Rollo was requested to kiss the king's toe in token of submission to him, he haughtily refused, but bade one of his followers do it instead of him. This man, who did not like the humiliating task any more than his chief, lifted the king's toe so high that he tilted backwards and fell on the ground, causing great laughter among the Normans.

So Rollo and his followers settled down in the country which was given them, and which they called from their own name Normandy. Rollo divided the land among the chief of his followers, in return for which they were to acknowledge him as their duke or leader, and follow him to battle when he summoned them. This was the beginning of the feudal system which the descendant of Rollo, William the Conqueror, introduced into England.

By-and-by Rollo became a Christian ; and gradually,



as the years went on, the Norman invaders adopted the religion, the customs, and even the language of the people among whom they had settled. When William the Conqueror came over to this country, the language which he and his followers spoke was not the language of the old vikings—not the language of Rollo and Harald Harfager; but rather that of Julius Cæsar and his Roman legions, wonderfully changed no doubt as it passed through the ears and lips of Gaul and Frank to those of the Normans. But if the Normans changed their customs, religion, and language, they did not lose their old spirit of daring and adventure. It is the same spirit, refined and elevated by civilization and the religion of Christ, that shows itself later in what was the greatest glory of the Middle Ages—chivalry and the crusades.



VIKING SHIP.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE CID—THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MOORS IN SPAIN.

NOT even the deeds of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table, of Charlemagne, or of Roland, the bravest of his paladins, have been more often sung in song or celebrated in story than those of Rodrigo (or Ruy) Diaz, the hero of Spain. In some cases, I am afraid, the stories told of him are due to the imagination of the story-teller, so that this chapter cannot be said to be entirely historical. Nevertheless the Cid is a historical character, and even if he did not do all the grand feats attributed to him, he has a right to a place here.

He was born at Burgos, in the north of Spain, somewhere between 1030 and 1040, at the time when the Danish kings were ruling in England, and more than quarter of a century before the Norman Conquest. At that time the largest part of Spain was ruled over by the Moors, who had come from Africa to Spain in the beginning of the eighth century, and had conquered it. There is a story that they had been invited to come by an enemy of the king who was ruling in Spain at the time. This king, whose name was Roderick, has sometimes been called "the last of the Goths," because he was the last king

Birth of  
the Cid.

The Arabs  
in Spain.

Roderick,  
the last of  
the Goths.



of the Visigoths or West-Goths, who, after the fall of Rome, had founded a kingdom in Spain, as the Ostrogoths or East-Goths had done in Italy. It is said that Roderick had given offence to a certain Count Julian, who, in revenge, invited the Arabs to come over from Africa, which they had just conquered.

So, under their leader Tarik, they crossed over to Europe and landed in the south of Spain, where the British flag is flying to-day—on the peninsula which was then called Calpe, but which has since been called, from the name of the Arab leader, Gibraltar, or the *mountain of Tarik*. Roderick got together an army, and met the invaders in battle; but he was completely defeated, and, in flying from the enemy, was drowned in the Guadalquivir, one of the great rivers of Spain (711 A.D.). After that, the Arabs conquered all the people, except a few brave Goths, who took refuge among the high mountains in the north. It was after this conquest of Spain that the Arabs advanced far into France; and were finally put to flight by the grandfather of Charlemagne at Tours.

During the centuries that they ruled the land, the Moors do not seem to have treated the people of Spain with great cruelty or severity. They were more civilized than the Goths. Among them were many learned men who, during those dark ages, when all the learning of Greece and Rome seemed to be lost for ever, did more than any other people at the time for the cause of science. They studied the works of the Greek philosopher Aristotle, and even translated them; they did a great deal for the science of medicine and for chemistry; and they were also distinguished by their knowledge of mathematics and arithmetic. But they were not Christians; they were followers of the religion of

*Islam*, or Mohammedanism, as it is called from the name of the founder Mohammed, who was born in the sixth century A.C.

Naturally, the Christians did not like to be ruled over by Mohammedans; and as the years went on, the brave people who had taken refuge among the mountains at the time of the Moorish conquest, gradually recovered a great deal of the country in the north from their conquerors. At the time the Cid was born, there was more than one Christian king ruling in the north, though the Moors or Arabs still held the larger part of the country; and many were the battles that were fought between Christian and Mohammedan.

It was the part he bore in these battles that made Rodrigo Diaz, afterwards called the Cid, the national hero of Spain. The first great feat that is told of him is that he conquered five Moorish kings. As the story goes, when Rodrigo "was as yet a stripling not twenty summers old," a Moorish army, led by five Moorish kings, entered Castile, a Christian kingdom in the north of Spain, laying waste, and burning and plundering; and great was the hurt which the good country suffered at their hands, and many were the captives, both men and women, whom they carried off, as well as flocks and herds. But when Rodrigo heard what had happened, he mounted his horse, and rode forth and gathered round him a company of followers. With these he followed after the Moors, and overtook them among the mountains of Oca, and swiftly fell upon them and put them to flight, and took the five kings captive. Then he divided the spoil amongst all—both of those who had fought with him, and of those who had fought against him, he gave to each man his share—and the five kings he sent home free to their own

country. But before they went, they kissed his hand and called him "Cid," which means in their language *lord*; and ever afterwards they acknowledged him as their chief, and sent him rich tribute.

After that, many were the brave deeds which "my Cid" did in the service of the king Don Ferrando of Castile, and many were the battles which he won—so many that, if I were to try to tell you of them all, I should fill this book with nothing else. But better than all his deeds of strength and feats of arms was his conduct to the poor leper, of which I shall tell you the story.

After his victory over the five Moorish kings, Rodrigo set out on a pilgrimage with twenty knights as followers. And as they journeyed on their way, they came upon a leper who was fast stuck in a mire, and who shouted with loud cries to them to help him. Well, the other knights passed on, and would not so much as reach out a hand to pull the poor man out. But the Cid leaped from his horse, and helped him out of the mire, and placed him before him on the saddle, and so carried him to where the pilgrims were to pass that night. And at supper he placed the leper beside him at table, and bade him eat out of his own plate. At this his knights, in sore indignation, rose up and left the room. But Rodrigo ordered a bed to be got ready, and he and the leper slept together. Now at midnight the Cid was awoke out of his sleep by feeling, as it were, a cold breath pass right through him between his two shoulders; and he looked about him, and lo, the leper was gone! But afterwards there appeared before him a spirit in white and dazzling raiment, who spoke to him and said, "I, whom thou didst take for a poor leper, and didst help—I am Saint Lazarus. And in

return for what thou hast done for the love of God, it shall be that whenever that breath which thou hast felt shall pass through thee, thou mayest ask whatever thou wilt, and it shall be accomplished. Thou shalt be feared by Moor and Christian, and never shall thy enemies prevail over thee." And having spoken, the spirit vanished.

I have not space to tell of how King Don Ferrando died, of how he had divided his kingdom among his sons, and how they fought together on his death. At first Ruy Diaz, as Rodrigo is often called, fought for King Don Sancho, the eldest son of the old king; and after King Don Sancho was slain, he fought for King Don Alfonso. And faithfully he served King Don Alfonso, and many brave battles he fought in his cause; but after a while the other hidalgos or nobles of the king, who were jealous of my Cid, whispered evil against him to the king. And the king believed them, and was wroth against Ruy Diaz, and bade him leave his kingdom within nine days, and not return. Then the Cid told his kinsmen and his vassals how the king had banished him from his country; and they all answered that they would follow him wherever he went.

So the Cid went forth sadly from his home, and rode out of the city of Burgos, followed by his faithful kinsmen and vassals. And the men and women of Burgos were at the windows of their houses to see him pass; and they wept at the thought of Ruy Diaz, the Campeador (champion), leaving the city for ever. Then he rode to the monastery where he had sent his wife and his little girls to remain till he should send for them under the care of a holy abbot; and his chronicler tells us that "the parting between them was like separating the nail from the quick flesh."

Well, the Cid and his followers wandered about from city to city, and many battles did they win against the Moors in open field, and many a town they took by siege, and much spoil they gained. But for a while, I am sorry to tell you, Ruy Diaz turned his arms against his brother Christians and his king. For the king, after he had banished him the first time, recalled the Cid to fight for him; and again he banished him a second time, because the other hidalgos whispered lies against him as they had done before. Then Rodrigo was wroth against the king, and for a while he fought against him and laid waste his land; but afterwards they were reconciled. Then the Cid fought no more against his king, but against the Moors.

After much wandering and fighting and plundering, Rodrigo and his followers at last besieged the town of Valencia. Now Valencia is a very strong city in the east of Spain, and they had long waiting and hard work before they could take it; but take it they did in the end. I cannot tell you here all the story of the siege, but you can read it in the *Chronicle of the Cid*, written in English by the poet Southey from the Spanish of the old poets and chroniclers. When at last the Moors opened the gates of the city, they were, as the chronicle tells us, "like men risen from the grave—yea, like the dead when the trumpet shall sound for the day of judgment, and men shall come out of their graves:" for they had had but little food while the long siege lasted.

So the conquerors entered in and took possession of the city, and the Cid ruled in it. Then he sent a trusty follower to fetch his wife and daughters to him there; and great was his joy when he heard of their coming; and he rode forth to meet them on his good horse



Bavieca, whose fame equals that of Bucephalus, the horse of Alexander.

After his wife and daughters were come, he ruled peacefully in Valencia for five years, and his wife abode with him, and his daughters also until their marriages. And during all that time, as the chronicle tells us, "he sought to do nothing but to serve God, and to keep the Moors quiet who were under his dominion."

But after the five years were past, there came a great Moorish host against the city, led by King Bucar of Morocco. And the Cid was now old and feeble, and he felt that his end was near; but he was told in a vision that he should conquer King Bucar, not indeed living but dead. So he called together the noblest of his followers, and told them how he had been warned that he must leave them in thirty days, and advised them what they should do, when he was no more, to conquer the Moors. And on the twenty-ninth day thereafter he took his leave of his dear wife and of his faithful followers, and on the following day (May 29, 1099) he died.

Death of the  
Cid, 1099.

Then his followers did what he had told them: they made no cries nor lamentations to let it be known among the Moors that their lord was no more; but they bathed his body and anointed it with ointment and embalmed it, and set it up on a saddle and supported it with a framework of boards, so that the body sat upright. And then they put clothes upon it, and placed the saddle and the body on the good horse Bavieca, and they went forth from the city leading the horse. And the Moors were put to flight, and fled to the sea and took ship. But the Christians journeyed on till they came to the country of King Don Alfonso; and there the Cid was buried with great pomp.



## CHAPTER V.

### RICHARD CŒUR DE LION—THE CRUSADES.

WHILE the Cid was fighting against the Arabs in Spain, another people had conquered them in Asia, and had taken their great city of Bagdad. These were the Turks, a savage race belonging to the centre of Asia, who about this time rose to great power—to such power, indeed, that they more than once ventured to invade the Roman empire of the East, and to meet the army of the Romans in battle. One emperor of the East even asked them to help him against the Normans, who were attacking the empire.

Bagdad  
taken by  
Turks, 1055.

The Turks  
help the Ro-  
man emperor  
against the  
Normans,  
1081.

But what I wish specially to tell you about the Turks at this time is that they conquered the Holy Land, and Jerusalem fell into their hands. Before that time it had been held by the Arabs, who, although they were not Christians, did not interfere with, or ill-treat in any way, the Christian pilgrims who used to flock to Jerusalem to visit the Holy Sepulchre; and we are even told that the great khalif of Bagdad, Haroun-al-Rasheed, of whom you read so much in the *Arabian Nights*, presented the key of the Holy Sepulchre to Charlemagne. The Turks, however, acted quite differ-

Conquest of  
Jerusalem  
by the  
Turks.

ently: no sooner were they in possession of Jerusalem than they began to treat the Christian pilgrims with the greatest rudeness and cruelty.

The complaints of the pilgrims spread all over Europe, and the hearts of the Christians in every country were stirred with anger and indignation. A great  
**The First Crusade.** army, led by nobles of every Christian country of Europe, amongst whom was Robert of

Normandy, eldest son of William the Conqueror, was gathered together, and set out for the Holy Land to punish the infidel Turks, and to protect the Holy Sepulchre and the Christian pilgrims. The war that followed was the First Crusade, or war of the Cross. Every man who fought in the war had a cross marked on his right shoulder. I am not going to tell you here the story of the First Crusade. A great deal of blood was spilt in

it, and a great many lives were lost; but it  
**Chivalry.** was the means of stirring up and calling forth what was the noblest thing in the Middle Ages—the spirit of chivalry or knighthood. If it is true that the ideal of the Romans of old was the freedom of Rome, it is true also that the ideal of the noble young men of the Middle Ages was chivalry or knightliness. And this meant a good deal: it meant courage, and military skill, and above all, honour. Every youth of noble family and noble nature nourished in his heart the ambition to become a knight, or to win his spurs, as it was called. And the spurs were not so easily won. Not till he had seen some hard service in the field, or had done some act of unusual daring, living meanwhile a life unspotted by dishonour, could the ambitious youth hope to wear them. The vows which the young knight was called upon to make at the time of the crusades were like a religious oath. He was required to under-

take to support the cause of Christ against infidels, to guard his own honour sacredly, to help the weak against the strong, and to be the champion of woman.

There were many noble young knights in the army of the Crusaders, and wonderful were the feats of arms which some of them performed. Jerusalem taken by the Crusaders, 1099. In the end they were rewarded by success: the Holy City fell into their hands in 1099, nearly three years after they had first started.

During the years that followed, several Christian nobles reigned in turn as king of Jerusalem; and two bodies of Christian knights, the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitalers, were formed to help to protect the new Christian kingdom. But the Mohammedans gradually became too strong for the small body of Christians; and at last, Jerusalem taken from the Christians, 1187. in 1187, they again took Jerusalem—just eighty-eight years after it had been taken by the Crusaders.

It was after this that the Third Crusade took place, in which our king, Richard Cœur de Lion, so much distinguished himself. Richard is one of the favourite heroes of English history, thanks rather Character of Richard. to the wonderful stories which have gathered round his name than to actual fact. Handsome and powerful, and more than usually daring and courageous, he is just the kind of man about whom the old poets loved to sing and weave marvellous tales of adventure. He himself had picked up some knowledge of music and verse-making from the minstrels of the south of France, where he spent his youth. But in spite of this and other accomplishments—in spite, too, of his great courage—I do not think that Richard was quite the ideal Christian knight; indeed I think he was just a bold, daring,

passionate Northman, like his ancestor Rollo, with some external polish of civilization, with a warm zeal for the cause of the Christian religion, and above all with a burning desire for military glory.

On the death of his father Henry II., he became king of England; and no sooner was he crowned than he began to make preparations for the crusade by selling whatever he could lay his hands on. Land and offices, and whatever men would give money for, he sold. He was heard to say that he would sell London, the capital of his kingdom, to get money. To William, king of Scotland, who had become the vassal of Henry II., he sold his freedom from English sovereignty.

In 1190 he met Philip, king of France; and the two kings, with an army of 100,000 men, set out for the Holy Land. They passed the winter in the island of Sicily, where feelings of jealousy broke out between them which only became stronger with time. In the spring of 1191 they set sail from Sicily for the Holy Land. The English fleet was driven against the island of Cyprus, which you know now belongs to Britain. The king of Cyprus was guilty of ill-treating some of the shipwrecked crews. To punish him, Richard attacked and took Cyprus, deposed the king, and then sold the island to Guy de Lusignan, who was at that time called king of Jerusalem, and whose family reigned afterwards in Cyprus for three hundred years.

When Richard landed at last on the east coast of the Mediterranean, he found Guy de Lusignan, at the head of an army composed largely of pilgrims from Europe, engaged in besieging the town of Acre, which you will

see marked in your map. The siege had lasted for two years, and the Christians were suffering great hardships, which were increased by the breaking out among them of a terrible plague.

Siege of  
Acre.

Some German merchants there, who came from the coast of the Baltic Sea, had done what they could for the sufferers by making tents out of the sails of their ships. These men were afterwards formed into a body of knights, like the Knights Templars, and were called the Teutonic Knights. The Teutonic Knights afterwards founded the modern kingdom of Prussia.

The  
Teutonic  
Knights.

When Richard reached Acre, he was laid up with fever; but so impatient was he to be in the thick of the battle, that, ill though he was, he had himself carried out on a mattress, and directed his men how to make preparations for the siege. During the siege the quarrels between the French and English kings often prevented anything being carried out; but

Surrender  
of Acre.

when they did at length act together, they forced Saladin, the brave leader of the Mohammedans, to surrender. After the Crusaders took possession of Acre, King Philip returned to France, and Richard was left to carry on the war. He marched southwards towards Jerusalem, which he intended to take; but which, after all, he never even attacked. Disputes and divisions broke out among the leaders of the army;

Division in  
the army  
of the  
Crusaders.

and between Richard and the duke of Austria in particular there grew up an enmity as bitter as that which had existed between Richard and the king of France. There are many stories told to account for this enmity, one of them being that, at the time of the siege of Acre, Richard seized the Austrian flag, which was waving on



the ramparts, and flung it into the ditch. This story may or may not be true; but if it is, Richard paid dearly afterwards for having, in a momentary fit of temper, insulted the pride of the duke of Austria.

After coming almost within sight of Jerusalem, the army of the Crusaders turned back. We are told that, before turning back, Richard was led to the top of a hill, from which the sacred city could be seen. But Richard would not look upon the city he was leaving in the hands of the infidel. While his guide pointed before him to the buildings dimly visible in the distance, the shame-stricken king held up his shield before his face. What feelings must have been his when, as he slowly descended the hill, he thought of what might have been but for those unworthy quarrels among the leaders of a Christian host—when he thought that, but for these, he might have seen the Christian cross flash on the roof of the mosque where it had stood for nearly a century, until torn down by the victorious Mohammedans five years before.

So, sadly and sorrowfully, Richard sailed away from the Holy Land. As its shores slowly faded from his sight, he stretched out his arms towards it, and exclaimed, “Most holy land, I commend thee to the care of the Almighty! May he grant me life to return and deliver thee from the yoke of the infidels!” It was not owing to want of will or want of courage at least that he left it in the hands of the infidel then. During the year or more since his first coming to the Holy Land, Richard had given signal proofs of his great strength and daring in many an attack upon the enemy. His name was feared and honoured by the Mohammedans over all the land, and even after his time, we are told, the Arab would exclaim to his

**The return  
of the army.**

**Richard sails  
from the  
Holy Land.**



horse, when it started and pricked up its ears, "Dost think it is King Richard?"

The English fleet reached Sicily in safety, but the vessel in which the king was sailing with a few followers was tossed about and driven ashore; and after several mishaps Richard found himself wandering about the country of his enemy, the duke of Austria, accompanied by one knight and a boy, his other followers having been seized and imprisoned. For a while Richard, disguised as a pilgrim, and with his beard unshaven, wandered on without being recognized; but at last he fell into the hands of the duke, who took care not to lose the opportunity of avenging himself for the insults he had suffered in the Holy Land. Richard was placed in a strong castle, where he remained closely guarded for about four months.

Richard  
is taken  
prisoner by  
the duke of  
Austria.

There is a pretty story told of how, when the people in England were all in ignorance of the whereabouts of their king, Richard's faithful minstrel, Blondel, set out to find his master; how he wandered about for a long time without finding any trace of him; and how at last one day when, wearied with his wanderings, he had sat down to rest outside the walls of the strong castle of Trifels, the notes of an old French song which Richard used to sing floated out to his ears. Eagerly the minstrel took up the song, and sang aloud and clearly the following verse, then listened breathless and with beating heart. Again the voice within—the voice which now the faithful minstrel knew to be the king's—took up the strain. Then wild with joy Blondel set forth, and told how he had at last found the king, and soon Richard was set free by the payment of a large ransom, which his poor subjects were heavily taxed to make up.

The story  
of Blondel.

Richard is  
ransomed.

History does not vouch for the truth of Blondel's part in this story, but there is no doubt that the king was set free on the payment of a heavy ransom, and returned to England.

He did not remain long in his kingdom, however. Not long after his return he heard that his estates in France had been attacked, and he hastened over to the Continent to protect them. There he was wounded during a siege, and he died before he was able to fulfil his vow to lead another crusade to the Holy Land.



## CHAPTER VI.

### DANTE—THE GUELPHS AND THE Ghibelines—THE RISE OF MODERN POETRY.

YOU have heard a great deal hitherto about fights and fighting-men ; now I am going to tell you about a poet—the greatest poet since the time of Virgil, or perhaps, as some say, since Homer—Dante, the greatest poet of Italy and the first of modern times.

Dante, or, to give his name in full, Dante Alighieri, was born in 1265 in Florence, a city which, like many other cities of Italy at that time, or like the cities of ancient Greece, was a republic governed by its own citizens. In the ninth century, when, as you remember, the Northmen were wandering about attacking and plundering whatever and wherever they could, and when the Arabs too had spread into Europe, the Italian cities were surrounded with strong walls, to protect the peaceful citizens from the attacks of those rude tribes ; and since then they had gradually risen in importance and prosperity.

Birth of  
Dante, 1265.

Rise of  
the Italian  
cities.

Three centuries later, not very many years before Richard Cœur de Lion led his army of Crusaders to the Holy Land, and when his father, Henry II., was ruling in England, the cities of Lombardy had to fight hard for their freedom against the tyranny of the emperor of

Germany. I told you that, after the death of Charlemagne, his empire was broken up, and France was ruled over by one king and Germany by another. But the

**Frederick Barbarossa.** king of Germany still called himself emperor, and he was acknowledged as chief by a large part of Italy. Now Frederick Barbarossa, or Red Beard, who was emperor of Germany from 1152 till 1190, was not content with being acknowledged as

**League of Lombardy.** chief by the free cities of Lombardy. He made up his mind to take their freedom from them.

Then the cities united together against the emperor, and formed what was called the League of

**Peace of Constance, 1183.** Lombardy; and bravely they fought in defence of their freedom. In the end they conquered the emperor in a great battle, and then

there was a treaty, called the Peace of Constance, by which they secured their freedom.

But though they had so nobly come out of the struggle against the tyranny of the emperor, I am sorry to say that the Italian cities did not thenceforth remain at peace. On the contrary, they were almost always at war with one another, and all of them sided with one or

**The Guelphs and the Ghibelines.** other of the two great parties which for a great many years divided Europe—the party of the Ghibelines and the party of the Guelphs.

The quarrel between these two parties was whether the emperor of Germany or the pope of Rome was to have chief power. During the last centuries the power of the pope, or bishop of Rome, had been gradually becoming greater, and at last, in the eleventh century, a very able pope, Gregory VII., had declared that the emperor should not have the right of choosing the popes and appointing them, as he used to do, but that they should be quite independent of him. In the wars that followed

later, the party that supported the pope were called the Guelphs, while the emperor's party were called Ghibelines.

At the time that Dante was born, all the Italian cities took a side in this great quarrel, and Dante's native city, Florence, sided with the Guelphs, or the party favourable to the pope. Dante's own family were Guelphs, and seem to have been in a good position in the city. His great-grandfather had died fighting in the Holy Land at the time of the Second Crusade.

As a boy, Dante seems to have been well educated, and afterwards we hear of him studying at universities both in Italy and in France; but this is not certain. There is no doubt, however, that he was a distinguished scholar, and we are told, too, that he was skilled in music, and even in drawing. But scholar though he was, he could fight for his city when it was necessary, and we twice hear of him taking part in battle against the Ghibelines.

What was of greatest importance, however, in Dante's youth was his love for Beatrice—a love which had the greatest power over him throughout his life. He was only nine years of age, a shy, sensitive boy, with large, dreamy, dark eyes, and a head filled with strange fancies which he told no one, and *could* tell no one, when his parents took him to a party at a neighbour's house, where he saw Beatrice for the first time. She was the daughter of the neighbour (Folco Portinari) who was giving the party, and was a little girl of about Dante's own age, dressed in a simple childish frock of a crimson colour. No doubt to the other people present Beatrice was only a beautiful little girl and nothing more, but to the dreamy poetic boy she seemed like an angel—a vision of beauty and

Florence.

Dante's  
boyhood.

His meeting  
with  
Beatrice.



goodness. From that night Beatrice became to the boy Dante what Rome was to Regulus, what knight-hood was to the noble young men of the Middle Ages—his *ideal*, what he must always try to live up to and be worthy of, even though he never hoped to win her.

In his first work, the *Vita Nuova* (New Life), he tells all about his love for Beatrice; and we see how the mere thought of her, which was almost always in his mind, helped to make him nobler and better. When he was still quite a young man, Beatrice died; and the grief of the young poet was very deep. But though she was dead, Beatrice still continued to be his ideal; he still constantly thought of her, and dreamed of her, and wrote of her, and looked forward to the time when it should please God “to suffer my soul to see the glory of my lady, of that blessed Beatrice.” In his great poem, of which I am going to tell you, he describes how he meets the soul of Beatrice in Paradise, and how she is his guide over the heavenly regions.

But between the death of Beatrice and the writing of his great poem, many important events happened in the life of Dante. Florence was at that time much disturbed by a quarrel between two less important parties than the Guelphs and Ghibelines—the *Bianchi* and *Neri*, or Whites and Blacks—and Dante threw himself into public affairs, and did what he could to bring peace to the city, which he loved almost as Socrates loved Athens, or as Regulus loved Rome. He went on several embassies in behalf of the city, and for a while he was one of its chief rulers, and did his best to put an end to disputes and strife. But in the year 1301, when he had gone on

The “*Vita Nuova*.”

Dante  
takes part  
in public  
affairs.



an embassy to Rome, a party who were unfavourable to him got into power, and they sentenced him to be exiled for ever from his native city. If he was found within its walls—so ran the sentence—he was to be burnt to death.

He is exiled,  
1301.

So for the next twenty years of his life, till 1321 when he died, the great poet wandered about from place to place, taking refuge wherever he could, and trying by every means in his power to get back to his beloved Florence. But in vain: his great poem was written in exile, and in exile he died in 1321, at Ravenna.

His death,  
1321.

During the twenty years of his homeless wanderings, although he often received much kindness both from friends and from strangers, who took him into their houses and gave him food and lodging, he felt to the full the misery of exile. He tells us himself how bitter to the banished man is the bread of others, and how hard it is to go up and down by other people's stairs. I think it was what he suffered himself as an exile, and what he saw other people suffering, that made him see what a great misfortune these divisions between parties were, that made him think what a glorious thing it would be for Italy if, instead of being divided between pope and emperor, Ghibeline and Guelph, it were to become one united nation governed by one king. But many centuries were to pass after Dante's time before this union could be realized. Still I think he helped to bring it about, or at least laid the foundation for it, though not by fighting and conquering as Charlemagne did in order to found *his* united empire, but by writing a book—his *Divina Comedia* (Divine Comedy). You will be surprised at my saying that Dante helped to unite Italy by writing a book; but I think

The "Divina  
Comedia."

I can explain what I mean. Before the time of Dante, every great book that was written in any country in Europe was written in Latin or Greek. During the Middle Ages, Latin was considered the proper language to write in; the languages spoken by the peoples of the different countries were thought by the few learned men who lived at the time to be much too rude and barbarous to be put into books. A few books had been translated into the language of the people by Alfred the Great of England and by other scholars; and there were some songs and ballads composed in the language of France, of Italy, and even of the Anglo-Saxons, before the time of Dante. But no great work had been written in any of the languages of modern Europe till Dante wrote his *Divina Comedia* in Italian. Now don't you think it would help to bring the people of the different cities of Italy more together, to make them feel more like one people, that here was a book written in the language which they all spoke and could all understand? The people of Genoa, and Pisa, and Milan, would not call Dante a Florentine, you may be sure; they would be eager to claim him as a countryman, and would call him *Italian*, as they would gradually come to call themselves, so losing sight in time of the smaller divisions, and learning to think of all Italian-speaking people as one nation. Have not the works of Shakespeare helped to make all English-speaking people one; and do not the songs of Burns make all Scotsmen friends and brothers? That is what I meant when I said that Dante had laid the foundation of the union of Italy.

The *Divine Comedy* is divided into three parts, called the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso*—Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. In the first part (the *Inferno*) the poet tells how he fell asleep, and how in a dream

he was led through the abode of eternal suffering, and beheld how sinners are punished in the next world for the sins which they have committed in this one. His guide through this dismal region is the Latin poet Virgil, who afterwards leads him through Purgatory, the place where the souls of better men are purified and made fit to enter Paradise. When they reach the entrance to Paradise, which is described in the third part of the poem, Virgil takes leave of Dante, for he cannot enter into the abode of the blessed—he was not a Christian in life—and afterwards Beatrice, the lady whom the poet had worshipped all his life, becomes his guide, and explains to him all the marvels of the New Jerusalem.

I cannot tell you here all the wonders that the poet sees in these worlds, unknown to us. Perhaps some day you will read for yourselves the first great poem written in any language of modern Europe, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante.



FROM DANTE'S TOMB, RAVENNA.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ROBERT BRUCE—THE INDEPENDENCE OF SCOTLAND.

WHILE Dante was wandering about, an exile from his native city, two countries of Europe—both of them lands “of the mountain and the flood”—were making a glorious struggle for their freedom against the tyranny and oppression of a much stronger power. These countries were Switzerland and Scotland.

The struggle against tyranny had already been begun in modern Europe, as we have seen, by the free cities of Italy; and it was carried on later in England, where the subjects of the tyrant King John (the brother of Richard Cœur de Lion) forced him to acknowledge their rights by signing Magna Carta.

Magna  
Carta, 1215.

But I think it was in the mountain passes of Switzerland, and among the wilds and wastes of Scotland, that the noblest, bravest fight was fought for freedom.

Of the struggle in Switzerland I cannot tell you here, much though I should have liked to tell you the story of Tell, the great hero of the Swiss, and of the three brave men, with their thirty followers, who met by night in a dark, deep valley, and swore an oath to free their country from the tyrant; and of the glorious battle that was fought—and won!—by a band of Swiss peasants against the

The  
struggle in  
Switzerland.

trained army of the emperor of Germany—the battle of Morgarten, the “Marathon of Switzerland,” as it has been called. But I think it will be better to tell you more particularly how the people of Scotland fought for and won their independence.

Battle of  
Morgarten,  
1315.

For centuries the Scottish people had been governed by their own kings. During the twelfth century their king, William the Lion, had been taken prisoner by the king of England, Henry II., and had only been set free after swearing allegiance to Henry; but, as we have seen, he was afterwards freed from this oath of allegiance by Richard Cœur de Lion in return for a large sum of money. A century later, however, Scotland again came into the hands of the English king. This king was Edward I., the grand-nephew of Richard Cœur de Lion, and perhaps the greatest of all the Norman kings who had yet ruled in England. He had all the strength and courage of his great-uncle Richard, and like him he fought as a Crusader in the Holy Land; but he was a much wiser and abler statesman and general than Richard.

Scotland.

Edward I.  
of England.

Now while Edward I. was reigning in England, the king of Scotland died, leaving no children. Two noblemen claimed the Scottish throne—John Baliol and Robert Bruce; and as the Scottish people could not decide themselves who had the better right to be king, they asked Edward to settle the dispute. Edward was willing enough to do so; but he demanded that he should be acknowledged as Lord Paramount over Scotland. This was granted; and then Edward marched into Scotland with a large army and

Claimants  
of the  
Scottish  
throne.

Edward I.  
chosen to  
decide the  
question.



took possession of all the strongest castles. When the claims to the Scottish throne of the two nobles were brought before him, he decided in favour of John Baliol, who was therefore crowned king, but was given to understand that he was only the vassal or subject of England.

The Scottish nobles, however, could not bear the humiliating position of being subject to England, and they entered into a treaty with the king of France against Edward. Edward got together a large army, and having entered Scotland, carried everything before him. John Baliol appeared before him, and humbly asked for pardon, which was granted only on condition of the crown of Scotland being resigned into Edward's hands. Edward then sent the crown, with the sceptre, and the stone chair on which the ancient kings of Scotland had been crowned, to Westminster Abbey; and he forced the chief Scottish nobles to swear allegiance to him. Thus Scotland became part of Edward's kingdom.

But the Scots would not submit to English rule: no sooner was Edward out of the country than they rose in rebellion and attacked the English garrisons which he had left in the castles. At first they could not venture on any open attack on the English; but at length they found an able leader in Sir William Wallace, a Scottish hero no less celebrated than Robert Bruce. Under the leadership of this brave man they gradually increased in strength and daring, and at last they were able to meet and overcome the English forces at Stirling. I cannot tell you here all the brave deeds of Wallace—all that he did and all that he tried to do for

**Decides in  
favour of  
Baliol.**

**Revolt of  
the Scots  
against Ed-  
ward.**

**Edward con-  
quers Scot-  
land.**

**Sir William  
Wallace.**

**Battle of  
Stirling,  
1297.**



Scotland—as it is the portrait of Bruce that I am to give you now. In the end, after all his glorious struggles for the freedom of his country, he fell into the hands of the English by the treachery of a Scotsman, and was put to death as a traitor in 1305.

Death of  
Wallace,  
1305.

It was after the death of Wallace that Bruce came to the front in Scotland. He was the son of the Earl of Carrick, and grandson of Baliol's rival for the Scottish throne. As a young man, he did not show the great strength of character and decision of purpose that afterwards appeared in him. We hear of him at one time siding with Wallace, and at another swearing allegiance to Edward. But after the death of Wallace, when the hearts of all true Scotsmen were full of indignation against his destroyer, Edward of England, Bruce seems to have thought that the time had come to take possession of the throne which by right belonged to him, and to free his country from its English conquerors.

Robert  
Bruce.

At that time Baliol was in prison, and the only other claimant of the Scottish crown besides Bruce himself was the Earl of Badenoch, generally called the Red Comyn. Bruce offered to give this man the estates which he had inherited from his father, in return for which Comyn was to help Bruce to gain possession of the throne. Comyn consented to this proposal; but Bruce afterwards discovered that he had told the English king what had been arranged, and had even advised him to put Bruce to death. Indignant at his treachery, Bruce hastened to Dumfries, where Comyn was staying; and a meeting took place between the two in the chapel belonging to the convent of the Minorite Friars. Bruce, with fierce

Comyn's  
treachery.

anger and indignation, accused Comyn of treachery. Comyn retorted angrily, "You lie!" Overwrought with excitement at the discovery he had made, and with fatigue from his long rapid journey (for he was in London when he first heard of Comyn's treachery), Bruce could not restrain himself when he heard these words. A sudden fury seized him, and before

**The murder  
of Comyn.**

he knew what he was doing he had drawn his dagger, and the Red Comyn was lying bathed in a pool of blood at his feet. I think he was horror-struck at what he had done almost as soon as he had done it: when he appeared at the porch of the church where a few friends were waiting for him, he was pale and scared and haggard looking. "I doubt I have slain the Comyn!" he said, in a shamed, awe-stricken tone, when his friends, alarmed at his appearance, asked what was the matter. "You doubt it?" replied Kirkpatrick, who seems to have been a regular pattern of the rude, savage Scottish noble of the time—"you doubt it? I mak siccar" (I'll make sure); and he entered the church and killed the Comyn, who was lying wounded on the steps of the altar.

This story of the murder of the Comyn has left a terrible blot on the character of Bruce. I have told it to you because I must try to give you as true a portrait as possible, and it would not be true if I were to tell you only what is good, and nothing that is bad. After this you can imagine what a very dangerous position Bruce was in, and how nearly every one was against him. All the friends and relatives of the Comyn (and he belonged to a large and powerful family) were his deadly enemies; all clergymen and church people were deeply indignant against him for having profaned the church by committing a murder in it; and Edward I.

was, of course, furious at being openly defied. There was nothing left for Bruce to do but to try to gather a few brave followers round him, and fight his way to freedom and the throne of Scotland. That was what he did. In March 1306, surrounded by a small band of Scottish nobles, he was crowned at Scone, near Perth, by the Countess of Fife, she taking the place of her husband, who, according to custom, ought to have performed the ceremony, but who was then on the side of Edward; while a little golden circlet, taken from the image of some saint, took the place of the Scottish crown, then in Westminster.

Bruce  
crowned,  
1306.

When Edward heard what had taken place in Scotland, he took a solemn oath to march into the country and punish the Scots for what he called their treachery; and he got together a large army, and accompanied by his son, afterwards Edward II., he immediately began his march. Meantime, Bruce and his few followers were suffering the greatest hardships. Outcasts and exiles, with neither home nor country, they wandered about the wilds of Perthshire, accompanied by their wives and sisters, who, like their husbands and brothers, had no place of safety where they could take shelter. Often they had nothing to eat but the roots and wild berries which they could gather; at other times they would perhaps catch some fish or game. It is curious to think that while the Italian Dante was learning in exile how bitter was the bread of the stranger, in Scotland Bruce was forgetting the taste of bread altogether.

During this time, Bruce often amazed his companions by his wonderful strength and courage; and there are stories told of his feats of daring which I have not space to tell you here. Nor was it only by his courage in fight that he surprised and delighted his followers; he

showed equal courage and strength in endurance. Often when they were worn out and dejected with want and fatigue and suffering, he would cheer and inspirit them by telling them stirring tales which he had read of brave knights who had gone through great hardships and trials, but had conquered in the end.

The first winter after his coronation Bruce and his followers spent in Ireland, after having sent their wives and sisters, under the escort of Bruce's youngest brother Nigel, to Kildrummie. That castle was stormed by the English, who hanged the brave young Nigel and threw the women into prison. In the following spring, Bruce and his companions landed on the coast of Carrick, his family estate, attacked the village of Turnberry at night, killed the English soldiers who were quartered there, and carried off several horses and a quantity of silver plate, which afterwards helped to buy him soldiers. This was the first stroke of luck that Bruce had as yet had; but his troubles were by no means over. Two of his brothers, who had been gathering an army for him in Ireland, were taken by the English and brought before Edward, who instantly had them put to death. Bruce and his few followers were again obliged to wander about in concealment, this time in Carrick, pursued by the enemy; and many were the hairbreadth escapes of the exile king and his friends from the hands of the enemy, and many were the wonderful adventures they experienced—adventures as romantic as those of any knight-errant of fiction. One night when Bruce and a few wearied followers had got separated from the rest of his men, they suddenly heard through the darkness the deep bark of a bloodhound. They listened, and they heard it again and again, each time sounding nearer than the time before. Then they knew that the enemy

were on their track, and would soon overtake them. Bruce at once sent two men to bring up the rest of his followers; the others who were with him he posted behind a small stream, while he himself took his place alone at the ford, which only one man could cross at a time. Silently he waited in the darkness, a solitary, motionless, massive figure, prepared to meet whatever was in store for him. Louder and louder became the yells of the bloodhound, nearer and nearer came the enemy—two hundred men strong. Soon the first man plunged with a splash into the stream. But he never reached the other side: Bruce's spear pierced his body, and it fell lifeless into the water. So it befell the second, the third, and even the fourth. Then Bruce's followers came up, and by their sudden onset and their shouts frightened the enemy and put them to flight.

That is only one of the many wonderful feats of strength and courage performed by Bruce. I should like to tell you of others; but I must go on to relate the more important events of his life. After more than a year of the life of a mere outcast, who was hunted like a wild beast, he had managed to gather round him more followers; and when the English believed that he was dead, or his little band dispersed, he made two sudden attacks on their outposts. In 1307, he was able to meet the Earl of Pembroke in open battle at Loudon Hill, when the English were totally defeated.

Loudon Hill,  
1307.

Shortly after this battle, the best event took place that could have happened for the cause of Bruce: the brave, able Edward I. died on his march almost within sight of Scotland, after making his son and his chief barons swear that they would carry his bones before them into Scotland, and

Death of  
Edward I.



keep them unburied until that country should be conquered.

I cannot tell you here of all the successes gained by Bruce, while Edward II., forgetful of his oath to his father, was enjoying himself in London. In 1310, the English king did indeed lead three invading armies into Scotland; but they effected nothing, as the Scots simply laid waste the country before them, and then retreated northwards, leaving the English to advance if they liked into a country where there was nothing for them to eat. At last all the strong castles in Scotland which had been taken by Edward I. were in the hands of Bruce, except the castle of Stirling, which the English governor had promised to give up to the Scots at midsummer of the year 1314, if an English army did not come to his help before that time.

Before the day fixed on for the surrender of the castle, Edward II. had assembled an enormous army, and was advancing towards Stirling. But Bruce was prepared for him: when on the 23rd of June the English arrived within sight of Stirling, they found the small Scottish army drawn up in readiness for battle on the field of Bannockburn. I could fill pages if I were to attempt to describe to you the fight that took place there the following day, or to tell you one-half of the stories in connection with it that are cherished in the proud hearts of the Scots: how carefully and prudently Bruce had made his preparations for the battle (for with all his courage, and no man ever had more, he had the caution of his countrymen); how the Scots spent the night before the fight in prayer and watching, while the English feasted and revelled; how nobly Edward Bruce, the brother of the

Edward II.  
invades  
Scotland,  
1310.

Battle of  
Bannock-  
burn, 1314.



king, and the young Randolph his nephew, with the good Sir James Douglas and others of the Scottish nobles, bore themselves in the fight; how the English cavalry were powerless against the close-formed squares of the Scottish foot; and how the flower of the English archers went down before the impetuous charge of Bruce's small body of horse. After the battle, when the English king and the remains of his army were fleeing from the country, thirty thousand English were found dead on the field, and the prisoners were so many that their ransoms made Scotland rich in one day. We are told that the loss of this battle was such a blow to English pride that afterwards a hundred English would not be ashamed to flee from four Scottish soldiers!

The next thirteen or fourteen years of Bruce's life are still the story of fights and conquests on the part of the Scots; for England had not yet acknowledged their independence. At length, in 1328, when Edward II. had died, and his son Edward III. was still a boy of some fourteen or fifteen years, a peace was concluded between the two countries, and the freedom of Scotland was acknowledged by the English. After that, Bruce, who was now worn out and feeble in body from the hardships he had undergone, retired to his palace of Cardross, where he led a quiet, peaceful life, employing his leisure time in improving his grounds and gardens, followed by his pet, a tame lion. Here he died in 1329.

Peace between England and Scotland, 1328.

Death of Bruce, 1329.

Before he died, he gave a last charge to his faithful follower Sir James Douglas, which the other with sobs promised to fulfil. It had been a dream of Bruce's that when his country should be at peace, he would go to Palestine to fight against the infidel. Now he had to

give up this dream; but he begged his trusty friend and follower, that when he was no more, Douglas  
His last commission. would take his heart to the Holy Land and bury it there. When Sir James gave his promise, Bruce thanked him. "For now," he said, "I shall die more in ease of my mind, sith I know that the most worthy and sufficient knight of my realm shall achieve for me that which I could never attain unto."

So in the following spring Douglas set out to fulfil his promise to the king, carrying with him  
How Douglas fulfilled it. the heart of Bruce enclosed in a casket of silver. But he never reached Palestine: when he was in Holland on his way there, he heard that the Christian king of Castile in Spain was at war with the Moorish sultan of Granada; and thinking that this would be a noble cause in which to fight, he made his way to the south of Spain, where the war was going on. While pursuing the Moors in battle, he and his followers got separated from the Christian army, and found themselves surrounded by the Moorish army. Taking the silver casket from his neck, to which he wore it fastened, he flung it into the midst of the enemy, exclaiming, "Forward, brave heart, as thou wert wont! Douglas will follow thee or die!" Then he dashed into the thickest of the enemy's ranks, and fell covered with wounds.

The next day he was found lying dead on the field beside the heart of his master, which he had reached through the midst of the foe. Thus perished one of Scotland's bravest heroes.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### JOAN OF ARC—THE END OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

THERE is not in all history a more wonderful story than that of Joan, or Jeanne, d'Arc, the Maid of Orleans. When we who are living now read that a young girl, ignorant and untaught, the daughter of a humble tiller of the soil in a lowly village of France, actually was able to free her country from a foreign invader, we feel it impossible to believe it. And yet there is no doubt that it is true.

Ever since the time of Edward III. of England, who began to reign when Bruce was still alive, till the days when Joan of Arc lived, there had been war between the countries of England and France. The Hundred Years' War. Though there was not constant fighting going on during all these hundred years, yet there never was a lasting peace between the two countries, so the war has been called the Hundred Years' War. It was our Edward III. who began it, and the Edward III. begins the war. Maid of Orleans put an end to it. Edward III. had laid claim to the crown of France, to which he had a right through his mother Isabella, the daughter of the king of France. As his right was not acknowledged by the French people, he entered France with an army; and there, against a much larger Battle of Crécy, 1346. French one, he gained the battle of Crécy—

a battle no less glorious than that which his father, Edward II., had lost against the Scots thirty years before at Bannockburn. The battle of Crécy is indeed one of the greatest glories of England. It was on the field of Crécy that Edward's son, the Black Prince, a youth of sixteen, so nobly won his spurs. Ten years later, this same prince, who is one of the favourite heroes of En-

Battle of  
Poitiers,  
1356.

glish history, won another splendid victory for his country over France at Poitiers, where he took the French king prisoner. I daresay you have heard how respectfully and courteously the victorious young prince treated his royal prisoner—how he waited upon him at supper the evening after the battle; and how, when the English army entered London in triumph, the French king was mounted on a splendid white horse, with the richest harness, while the young prince, his conqueror, rode at his side on a small black pony. After that there was a treaty of peace drawn up between France and England; but the peace did not last long. Every now and then war would break out between the two countries, and the kings of England got into the habit of considering themselves rightfully kings of France as well.

About sixty years after the battle of Poitiers, Henry V., who was reigning in England at that time, and who was one of the ablest and bravest of all the English kings, made up his mind to go to France and win the crown which he thought by right belonged to him. He landed near the town of Harfleur, which he took after a siege of five weeks. But meantime disease had broken out among his soldiers; and they suffered too from a scarcity of food, so that the army was very much weakened. Henry was strongly advised to turn back; but instead of doing so he boldly marched

forward, and with his little army, weakened and worn out as it was, he met the forces of the French, four times the strength of his own, on the plain of Agincourt—met them, and put them to flight! Five years later, when the English had made conquest after conquest in France, a treaty was drawn up between the two countries by which it was agreed that, after the death of the present king, Henry V. of England should be king of France. But only two years after this treaty was signed, Henry died; and two months after him died the king of France. Henry VI., then a mere infant, became king of England and of France.

**Battle of  
Agincourt,  
1415.**

**Treaty of  
Troyes, 1420.**

**Death of  
Henry V.**

At that time Joan of Arc was a child of ten or eleven years. She had been born three or four years before the battle of Agincourt. She was the daughter of a humble peasant who tilled his own little bit of land in the small village of Domrémy. There Joan was born and brought up, or rather *grew* up, for she did not get much education. We are told that she never learned to read or write; but her mother had taught her to say her prayers, to spin, and to sew, and her days were spent in these occupations. Well and diligently she fulfilled these humble tasks. Above the other maidens of the village she was distinguished for her diligence, her strength, and her energy. By-and-by, as she grew up, she became silent and dreamy, and loved to steal away from her companions to the little church, and kneel in prayer alone. And often strange dreams came to her as she tended the flocks in the silent, lonely fields, or sat and span before the cottage door. For her mind was strong and active; and while her busy fingers

**Joan of  
Arc.**

**Her dreams  
and  
visions.**



worked, it could not be idle, but must be working too. And at times she heard, or seemed to hear, voices in her ears that bade her be diligent in work and prayer, for that God had a great work appointed for her to do. So gradually it came to pass that this untaught, ignorant peasant-girl grew to believe that she was chosen by God to fulfil some special work; and the belief strengthened daily with her strength. But at first she did not know *what* work she was set apart to do: she waited till she should learn. Meantime, she told her thoughts and dreams to no one; indeed, there was no one to whom she could tell them, no one who would have understood.

So the days passed on, till at length, when she was barely seventeen, her dreams took shape, her mission became plain to her: she was to free France from the invading English, and set the dauphin, the late king's son, upon the throne! That was no small feat for an ignorant maiden of sixteen even to dream of doing. I do not know when or how it first became clear to her that this was her appointed mission. No doubt she had often from her earliest years heard of all the suffering that the long, cruel war had brought upon her beloved country—of villages destroyed by flames, of smiling fields laid waste, of churches plundered by the enemy, of deaths by sword in battle, by famine in siege; and often her warm young heart had swelled with indignant grief and shame for the calamities of France. Then perhaps, some winter evening as she sat beside the fire in the homely little cottage, her fingers busy with her spinning-wheel, and her mind full of her own strange thoughts, she heard the legend of the village of Domrémy from the lips of some old crone gossiping with her mother.



Centuries before, as people said, the old magician Merlin—the same who had reared and taught King Arthur of England—had foretold that France would fall by a woman and would be saved by a woman; and the woman who should save France, so ran the legend of Domrémy, should come out of Domrémy wood. Can you not fancy how Joan, with her mind full of the thought of her own exalted destiny, would listen to that tale; how her thread would break short suddenly and her wheel stand still, as there leaped into her mind the thought, “I am that woman—I, Joan of Arc!”

The legend  
of Dom-  
rémy.

When it became clear to her what her mission was, she spoke at last to her family, and told them she must set out to deliver France from the enemy, and place the crown upon the dauphin's head. At first they almost laughed at her; but when they looked into her melancholy, earnest eyes, they saw it was no laughing matter. Then they became alarmed: they feared that she had lost her reason, or that she was “possessed” by some evil spirit. The good mother who had taught her her prayers as a little child reasoned with her—and prayed for her too, I am sure. Perhaps she even bought some candles with her hard-won earnings to place upon the altar of the little church; for she was a simple, pious Roman Catholic. But it was all in vain. Joan held to her purpose; and when her parents would not listen to her, she went to her uncle, who lived near, and pleaded with him so earnestly to take her to the owner of the castle near that at last he consented.

Joan  
tells her  
parents  
of her  
purpose.

So Joan was brought before the great man of the castle, the seigneur of Baudricourt, and told him her strange tale. At first he, like the others, treated her

as one who had lost her reason; but there was something in the way she spoke, and pleaded her cause, something in the deeply-earnest look of her face, which persuaded him almost against himself to give her a horse and an escort of two or three men. So she set out; and after many adventures by the way, she reached Chinon, where the dauphin was, and begged to be brought into his presence.

Well, the dauphin thought to try her, to see if she really had unusual powers. So he disguised himself, and placed himself among his courtiers like one of themselves; and then the maiden was admitted. She stood a moment at the threshold looking around her; but as soon as her eye fell upon the dauphin, without an instant's hesitation she moved forward and kneeled before him, addressing him as king, and begging him to give her an army to lead against the English; for that it had been revealed to her that she, and none but she, should place the crown of France upon his head. At first the dauphin treated her request as mere madness; but at length she had her way, and soon set out with a small army for the town of Orleans, which was at that time besieged by the English. She had now attired herself in armour; and at her side she wore an ancient sword, which, it is said, she had been told in a vision was buried in the Church of St. Catherine, and which had been found exactly where she had said it would be. In her hand she carried a banner which she had herself embroidered, surrounded with a wreath of lilies, and with the face of God looking down from the clouds upon the earth worked in the centre of one side.

When she reached Orleans, the French inside the town were suffering the greatest hardships, and were almost

ready to surrender to the English; but when it became known that Joan had arrived, the greatest terror fell upon the English soldiers, for they believed she was bewitched; and she was able to make her way with her little army through the lines of the enemy into the town. You can imagine how eagerly the poor French within the walls welcomed the brave maiden who had come to save them at the peril of her own life! Once within the town, she attacked the English with such force that they were at last obliged to retire. So by her great courage and her faith in God this ignorant, humble peasant-maiden was able to save the good town of Orleans for her country, and to drive away the enemy. After that she gained other victories—one important one in particular at Patay, which I can only mention here; and she was present when, at her entreaties, the Dauphin Charles ventured to have himself crowned king of France in the town of Rheims. She stood at his side, holding her sacred banner unfurled in her hand.

Joan raises  
the siege of  
Orleans,  
1429.

Charles is  
crowned at  
Rheims.

When this had taken place, the maid felt that her work was done; and she desired to go to her humble home, and return to her old duties of tending the flocks and spinning and sewing; but the king refused to let her go as yet. After this she was less successful than she had been, for she did not fight with her old spirit and her old faith, knowing as she did that her hour had passed; and at last she fell into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, who was fighting on the side of the English, to whom the brave maiden, the saviour of her country, was sold by her countrymen.

Joan is sold  
to the  
English.

I wish I could tell you that our countrymen the

English behaved more nobly to the brave girl than her own had done. But, alas! I cannot. They kept her prisoner, made her undergo a long trial as a witch, and finally condemned her to death. **She is condemned to death.** And Charles—the dauphin as he had been, the king as she had made him—did nothing to save her, nothing at all. I wonder that, every time he heard his title spoken—the title which the Maid of Orleans had given her life to win for him—it did not cut him to the heart like a knife.

But Joan, dragging out the weary days of her imprisonment in the hands of the English, enduring insult and hardship of every description, did not suspect the dauphin, whom she had crowned king of France, of ingratitude and cowardice such as she herself was utterly incapable of. Day by day she waited, hopefully, undoubtingly, for the coming of her countrymen to release her—waited to the end. But she waited in vain. On the 30th of May 1431, she was led out to the market-place of Rouen, the town where she **Her death, 1431.** had been imprisoned, and there she was burned to death. To the last she showed the greatest courage and firmness. While the flames were leaping up around her, she called out again and again for a crucifix; and a rough soldier, touched by her cries, carved out of a piece of wood a rude cross, which he handed to her, and which she pressed to her lips and her heart.

There is a beautiful story told by the unlearned people of France that when all was over, when all that was left on earth of the noble, heroic Maid of Orleans was a small heap of smouldering ashes, a beautiful white dove, the bird of peace, rose up from out the smoking pile, and winged its way upwards toward the

sky. The meaning of the story at least is true, if not the story itself: out of the ashes of Joan of Arc arose the dove Peace, and spread its protecting wings over the fair land of France. Joan's heroic acts had awoke the slumbering spirit of the French: they arose and drove the invader from the land. The Hundred Years' War was ended by the heroism of a simple peasant-maiden.



JOAN OF ARC.

## CHAPTER IX.

### COLUMBUS—THE DISCOVERY OF THE NEW WORLD.

ONLY five years after Joan of Arc was burned at Rouen, through the ignorant superstition of the English, there was born a man who did much to enlighten men's ignorance and to widen their minds. That man was Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of America.

For centuries men had gone on living in the belief that they knew the world they lived in, and that the world they knew of was all. You can fancy their amazement when the news burst upon them that far away in the west there lay another world, as vast as that already known to them; you can fancy how ignorant it must have made them feel to think that that great world had been lying there all these centuries, while they knew nothing of it! Not the Greeks, with all their learning, not the Romans, who boasted that their empire stretched over the world, had ever dreamed of the world of the West—of America. The Greeks and the Romans, indeed, with all their learning and skill and power, had but vague notions of geography. Alexander the Great, by his conquests in Asia, did a great deal to make men know more about other countries besides their own; but it was not till after the time of Columbus that the true nature of this earth of ours, and the position of



the different continents upon it, were clearly understood.

Even before Columbus was born, the people of Europe had begun to take more interest than they used to do in the discovery of new lands by sea. I have told you how it is said that those wild, sea-roving Northmen had reached the shores of America centuries before the time of Columbus; but if they had, the other people of Europe had no history of their discovery—at most there was only some vague story that land had been reached westwards by some Norse sea-rovers. Early in the fifteenth century (the century of Joan of Arc and of Columbus), the people of Portugal, which, as you will see from your map, is the western part of the most westerly peninsula of Europe, had begun to show a spirit of enterprise and discovery. Expeditions were sent out by them to endeavour to find a passage by the south of Africa to India, and they discovered the islands of Madeira and the Azores, and settled on the west coast of Africa.

No doubt stories of what the Portuguese had done and were doing reached the ears of the boy Columbus, and helped to stir up the spirit of inquiry and discovery that was born in him. His father was a well-to-do citizen of Genoa, a town in the north of Italy, where he carried on the trade of a wool-comber, and where his great son Christopher was born in 1436.

Christopher was taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and drawing as a boy; and he soon showed a keen interest in geography and a burning desire to go to sea. His father, seeing what his bent was, sent him to the university of Pavia, where he was taught geometry, astronomy, and naviga-

The  
Portuguese  
discoveries.

Birth of  
Columbus,  
1436.

His  
boyhood.

tion. But he was not long at the university. He was little more than a boy when he went to sea, on which he passed the following years of his life, taking part in many an expedition and many a small sea-fight.

He sets out  
to sea.

Life at sea in those days was a very different thing from what it is now. Men had not yet learned either to make or to manage ships as they do in our days; and they could not venture out on the wide ocean with their imperfect vessels and their ignorance of navigation. They looked upon the broad Atlantic, that stretched away to the west from the shores of Spain and Portugal, with a kind of superstitious awe; and no mariner would have thought of launching himself upon what appeared an endless stretch of waters. The Portuguese, indeed, had lately sailed the Atlantic; but they had not attempted to cross it—only to coast Africa with the hope of finding, to the south of that continent, a passage by which they could reach India. The ships of those days generally confined themselves to the narrow seas—the Mediterranean, the North Sea, etc. In these seas, fights would often take place between vessels belonging to different countries, or even to different noblemen, who often fitted out small fleets to attack by sea some land of which they wanted to take possession, or to which they laid claim. Columbus took part in several expeditions of this sort; and in particular he frequently attacked the vessels of the “infidel” Turks, which at that time it was considered almost a pious thing to do, just as it was to take part in a crusade. In a fight with some Venetian ships off the coast of Portugal, not far from Lisbon, his vessel was set on fire, and Columbus and his crew leaped into the sea—Columbus laying hold of an oar, by the help of which, as he

was a good swimmer, he managed to make his way to land.

It was in 1470 that Columbus, then a man of about thirty-four, went to Portugal, to which many men of learning, or of adventurous spirit, <sup>He goes to Portugal.</sup> were at that time drawn by the stories of the discoveries made by the people. In Lisbon, Columbus married the niece of one of the most <sup>He marries.</sup> distinguished of the Portuguese navigators, who had died not long before. Most probably his wife brought with her to her new home many tales of adventure; and seeing that her husband was much interested in all that concerned discoveries by sea, she would often relate them to him; and thus perhaps she gave him fresh stimulus. Meanwhile Columbus pored over every map, and chart, and writing of any sort connected with geography and navigation that he could lay his hands on. Sometimes he went expeditions with the Portuguese to Africa; at other times he supported his family by making maps and plans. Meantime his great project had arisen in his mind, and was steadily growing in strength—to sail out westwards over the apparently endless stretch of the Atlantic, with the hope of reaching land.

It was in the year 1474, four years after coming to Lisbon, that, so far as we know, he first told any one of his project, and of the reasons which had <sup>His project.</sup> led him to think of it. Curiously enough, though Columbus succeeded in carrying out one of the greatest discoveries that have ever been made, his faith that he should succeed was based upon a blunder. He believed that the Earth was round, as we know it to be, and that consequently it was possible to sail round it; but he believed that it was very much smaller than it

actually is; and the land he expected to reach by sailing westward was not an unknown continent, but the continent of Asia, which he thought stretched much further eastwards than it does. That there was land to the west of the Atlantic he felt sure from all he had heard. He had learned that trunks of trees had been washed up on the shores of the Azores which were unlike any that grew there, and that pieces of wood had been picked up in the Atlantic which were evidently carved with human hands, but not with iron tools.

When he had reached his conclusion that Asia could be reached by sailing west across the Atlantic, the idea became fixed in his mind, and he became filled with a solemn, almost religious belief, that he was appointed by Providence to make the voyage of discovery, just as Joan of Arc had believed that it was her divine mission to place the crown of France on the head of the dauphin. But it was impossible to carry out, or even to attempt, such a project as Columbus dreamed of without money to get ships and men and provisions. Columbus applied to the king of Portugal, who, however, refused to fit out an expedition for him. I am ashamed to tell you that the king was contemptible enough to permit a ship to be privately sent off on the route which Columbus had laid down. That ship, however, never got very far. The pilots took fright when they saw the boundless waters

He makes a  
proposal to  
the king of  
Portugal.

of the Atlantic stretching before them, and returned to Lisbon. Columbus, indignant at this base cunning, immediately left Portugal, taking with him his son, who was still a boy. His wife had been dead some time.

He leaves  
Portugal,  
1484.

From Portugal he went to Spain, in order to seek help from King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who at that

time ruled over Christian Spain. The Moors, against whom the Cid had fought four centuries before, were still reigning in the south part of Spain. the country, which was called Granada. When Columbus arrived in Spain, all the country was taken up with a great war which was going on between the Christian monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, and the Moorish king of Granada; and Columbus found it almost impossible to get any one to listen to his scheme. He waited from week to week, from month to month, in poverty and suspense, always hoping to get audience with the king and queen, and to be told that they were willing to grant him what he wanted. But the great war entirely took up the thoughts of the monarchs, and they had no attention to spare for the future discoverer of America.

It was not till seven years after his coming to Spain—not till he had followed the court about from place to place in the march against the Moors, even taking part himself in the war and distinguishing himself by his courage; not till he had endured great poverty, the ridicule of his fellow-men, and almost every form of hardship—not till then did he at last obtain the fulfilment of his hopes. In the end of the year 1491, he was summoned to the presence of Queen Isabella, who was at that time in the camp of the Christian army before the walls of Granada, the capital of the Moorish kings of Spain. Columbus was in time to witness the proudest sight which the Christians of Spain had ever beheld—the submission of the last of the Moorish kings to his Christian conquerors. He saw all the glitter and splendour of the Spanish army spread out before him, and he heard the shouts of triumph and the hymns of

Final conquest of the Moors in Spain, 1492.



thanksgiving that rose to the skies as the last of the Moorish kings came forth from his magnificent palace of the Alhambra and delivered up its keys to Ferdinand and Isabella. It was certainly the proudest moment in the history of Spain: thenceforth that country was a Christian kingdom, ruled by Christian monarchs. It is interesting to think of Columbus being present on that great occasion—Columbus, who was himself so soon to place another jewel in the crown of Spain.

At last, after his long years of waiting and suing, after all his hopes and fears and anxieties, Columbus,

Columbus  
sets out on  
his great  
voyage,  
1492.

then a man of fifty-six, obtained the wish of his life: he set sail, on the 3rd August 1492, with a small fleet of three vessels, of which, after some opposition, he had been named admiral. In his interview with Queen Isabella at Granada, he succeeded in arousing her interest in his proposed discovery, and she declared that she was ready to pledge her jewels to raise the necessary money, even though the king were unfavourable to the expedition. Even after the consent of both monarchs had been obtained, it was long before sailors could be got to go on board the vessels. They looked upon the proposal to sail across the Atlantic with a kind of superstitious horror. When at last Columbus had succeeded in getting crews for his three vessels—when they had put out into the open sea, when the last speck of land had vanished from their longing backward gaze, and only the wide waters of the mysterious unknown ocean stretched before and behind them as far as eye could see—then the men burst into tears, as they thought of the country they had left behind them, and the homes and friends they believed they should never see again.

It was on the 8th of October—more than two months



after the little fleet had set out from Spain—that land was first sighted. During these two months the anxieties and trouble which Columbus had to bear must have been terrible. As day after day and week after week passed by, and still there was no sight of land, the discontent of the crew increased to almost open mutiny and rebellion against their admiral, and there were even whispered among the men proposals to put him quietly out of the way and then to turn back. Columbus knew all this; but he never for a moment wavered in his course—his faith in his own destiny never left him. In his management of the men he showed firmness, kindness, and tact, doing everything in his power to awaken their interest and faith in the strange land to which he was leading them, and offering a large reward to the man who should first see land. At first this offer had but little effect, for the men did not believe they should ever see land at all; but by-and-by signs that land was not very far away began to reach them: little birds came singing about the ship, and a branch of thorn with red berries on it, as well as various weeds, were seen floating towards the vessels. Then, from being rebellious and dejected, the men became eager and excited; they kept a bright look-out, and many were the false alarms of land ahead.

First sight  
of land.

On the evening of October 7th, when the sailors had sung their vesper hymn, Columbus spoke to them very earnestly and solemnly of the goodness of God in having brought them in safety so far, and having granted them fair weather; then he told them that he believed they should that night reach land. Not many hours after, about ten o'clock, as he was eagerly scanning the darkness before him, he saw a light in the distance,

which seemed to move about, to appear and disappear again as if carried by some one along a shore. He called two men and bade them look, and both declared they saw the light. Then, though no one else thought anything of it, Columbus believed they had reached land, and that the land was inhabited. At two in the morning a gun from one of the other ships proved that he was right: land had been seen. Can you imagine the wild excitement of the sailors, the deep, intense eagerness, the awed solemnity and pious thankfulness of the admiral, as they waited with furled sails for the morning light?

When the sun rose on the 8th of October, there stretched before the eager eyes of Columbus and his men a beautiful island covered with verdure and trees. It was one of the Bahama Islands, which we now know are situated off the east coast of Central America, and which are part of the British empire; but Columbus did not know of the existence of America, and he believed that the island lay off the east of Asia. I cannot attempt to describe to you the feelings of the great discoverer when he first set foot on the new-found land. As soon as he landed, he threw himself on his knees and kissed the sand, thanking God for his kindness in permitting him to reach this unknown country. He then unfurled the Spanish flag, and took possession of the island in the names of Ferdinand and Isabella. Meantime a group of the natives had gathered on the shore, and were gazing with awe-struck wonder at the ships and at the new arrivals, with their strange clothes and weapons. In their ignorance and simplicity, they believed that Columbus and his followers were gods who had dropped from the skies. They were an innocent, harmless race

Columbus  
lands on  
one of the  
Bahama  
Islands.

of people, who treated the Spaniards with confidence and kindness.

After discovering several other islands, amongst them the island of Hayti or Hispaniola, as Columbus called it, he returned homewards in order to report to the king and queen of Spain his wonderful discovery. On the voyage they experienced a terrible storm, and almost despaired of ever seeing land again; but at last they arrived safely in Spain on the 15th March 1493, not much more than seven months after they had started. Very different was the reception of Columbus now from what it had been when he first arrived in Spain an unknown stranger! Church bells were rung, shops were closed, people rushed in crowds to welcome the returned discoverers. The journey of Columbus from Palos, where he landed, to Barcelona, where the king and queen were at the time, was like a royal progress.

Returns  
home,  
1493.

Six months later, he started again for the new-found country, with a fleet of seventeen vessels filled with men eager for the gold and riches which they believed that country contained. On Columbus himself every honour had been conferred; and as he sailed away from Cadiz, admiral of Spain and viceroy of the newly-discovered land, no one would ever have imagined that in a few years he was to return a prisoner loaded with chains.

His second  
voyage.

Yet so it was. In Hispaniola, which Columbus fixed upon as the seat of his new colony, and where he built a town, complaints and discontent soon broke out among the settlers when they found that it was not possible to become wealthy in a moment by the discovery of piles of gold. Many of the more ambitious of the colonists, too, looked with

Discontent  
of the  
colonists.

envy and spite upon the viceroy, who was not a Spaniard like themselves. Gradually reports unfavourable to Columbus reached the ears of the king and queen. Discontented colonists returned to Spain spreading false stories of the cruelty and severity of the new viceroy, and accusing him of having made false statements to the king and queen as to the condition of the newly-found country. At last the Spanish monarchs resolved to send a nobleman to Hispaniola to inquire into the conduct of Columbus and to take his place as viceroy.

When this commissioner arrived at San Domingo, a fort which Columbus had built on the coast of Hayti, and which has now grown into a town, Columbus was absent on an exploring expedition. All sorts of reports and slanders against him were brought by the discontented settlers to the new arrival. Bobadilla—that was the name of the royal commissioner—believed, or pretended to believe, them. He took possession of the house of Columbus and all that was in it, and distributed his goods amongst men to whom arrears of pay were owing. Then, having heard some rumours that Columbus intended to resist him with the help of some native chiefs, as soon as the great discoverer returned from his expedition he ordered him to be handcuffed and conveyed home to Spain.

So, in the year 1500, Columbus arrived in Spain loaded with chains, and quite broken down with all he had gone through—toil and hardship, anxiety and grief. On his arrival, he wrote a long letter to a friend at the court of the queen, relating all he had done and all he had suffered. When this letter was read to Queen Isabella, she was full of indignation, and ordered that

Columbus should at once be set free and brought into her presence ; and it is said that when he appeared before her, and she read the story of his sufferings in his haggard face and sunken eyes, she shed tears of sorrow.

Once more, in the year 1502, Columbus set out on a voyage to the West—the voyage which was to be his last. This time his intention was to sail right round the world, reaching India from the west, and thence returning, laden with the riches of that country, by the route which the Portuguese had discovered round the Cape of Good Hope. He expected to find a strait, where the Isthmus of Darien is situated in Central America, which would lead from the Atlantic into the Indian Ocean. But the expedition proved a failure ; and in 1504 he returned for the last time to Spain, utterly worn out with sickness and suffering and disappointment.

His last  
voyage,  
1502.

Returns  
to Spain,  
1504.

The last two years of the life of the great discoverer are painful to think of : they were years of poverty and want and hopeless petitioning. The money which had been promised him had not all been paid to him, and he writes to his son at this time :

The last  
years of  
his life.

“I do not own a roof in Spain. I have no resort but an inn, and, for the most times, have not wherewithal to pay my bill.” Queen Isabella, who had always befriended him nobly, died only a few days after his return to Spain ; and Ferdinand, who had never been his cordial friend, would not listen to his request to be restored to his former position as governor of the new country.

On the 20th of May 1506, while he was still hoping to be restored to the favour of the king, he died peacefully, surrounded by a few faithful friends.

His death,  
1506.



## CHAPTER X.

### COPERNICUS—THE RENAISSANCE—THE RISE OF MODERN ASTRONOMY.

COPERNICUS has been called the “great Columbus of the heavens,” because he did for our knowledge of the heavens what Columbus had done for our knowledge of the earth. Strangely enough, too, his great discovery followed that of Columbus by only a few years: it is in 1507 that he is supposed to have reached his conclusions regarding the true nature and movements of the heavenly bodies, which I shall explain to you by-and-by. He lived in a very interesting time in the history of Europe—a time which has been called the period of Renaissance. To explain what that word means, I must remind you of what I told you before—that, after the fall of the Roman empire, the great works of the Greek and Roman poets and philosophers and dramatists were neglected and almost forgotten. During the centuries that followed the fall of Rome, when the wild tribes of Saxons and Goths and Normans were settling in the different countries of Europe, people were too much taken up with protecting their own country or with invading some other to be able to think of anything else; and it seemed as if the learning and art and civilization of Greece and Rome had been swept away by the great

The  
Renaissance.



flood of barbarism that had poured into Europe,—as if a torrent of mud had spread over the smiling fields, burying beneath it the fair flowers and rich crops of learning and art so diligently sowed by the Greeks. But during what are called the Dark Ages, those buried flowers and crops had been steadily pushing their way upwards through their dark covering, and at length they reached the light, and amazed men with their beauty. The Greek spirit, which had fallen asleep in Hypatia at Alexandria, awoke again; the old Greek love of art and poetry and philosophy came once more to life. This reawakening or revival of learning is what is called the Renaissance.

I cannot tell you all the causes which helped to awake men's interest in learning, but I may mention some of them. Of course one great cause was that during the centuries since they had settled in Europe the different tribes had been gradually becoming more civilized. Then Dante's great poem, written in the language spoken by the people, would help to spread an interest in reading; and Dante was followed very shortly by two other Italian writers, Petrarch and Boccaccio. More than a century after the time of Dante, the art of printing was invented; and you can understand that this would help to bring books within the reach of people who before had been quite unable to get them. But what is generally supposed to be the chief cause of the revival of learning is the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Causes  
of the  
Renaissance.

Dante's  
poem.

Invention  
of printing,  
1440.

I have already told you how the Turks, a people of Central Asia, had risen to great power during the eleventh century, how they had conquered and spread over the country of the Arabs, and how they had even threatened Constantinople. Four centuries later they not merely

threatened that great city, but actually besieged and took it. The last Roman emperor, who, like the founder of the eastern capital, was called Constantine, fell fighting bravely, sword in hand. The Roman empire of the East had ceased to be; henceforth Constantinople was the capital of a Turkish monarchy. Many of the Greeks in the city fled before the conquering Turks, and spread themselves over the different countries of Europe, where they taught their own language, and helped at least to awaken among educated men a love of Greek literature and Greek learning.

The  
taking  
of Constan-  
tinople,  
1453.

It was twenty years after the fall of Constantinople, when Columbus was preparing for his great discovery by reading, and pondering, and studying maps and charts, that Nicholas Copernicus was born at Thorn, a town situated on the river Vistula, in what was then called the kingdom of Poland—a kingdom which no longer exists. Look in your map of Europe at the country through which the Vistula flows, with Russia to the east and Prussia to the west of it: that country is Poland. It is very far distant, as you will see, from Genoa, the birthplace of Columbus.

Birth of  
Copernicus,  
1473.

The father of Copernicus was a doctor, and Copernicus himself studied medicine, first at the great Polish university of Cracow, and afterwards at the university of Padua in Italy, where he took his degree. Even as a youth he had showed great talent for mathematics and astronomy, and after he left the university of Padua, he became professor of mathematics at Rome. Although he was wonderfully successful there, his lectures being attended by crowds of scholars, he did

His  
education.

Becomes  
professor in  
Rome.

not remain long in Rome, but returned soon to his native country, and took up his abode in the town of Cracow. Here he lived very quietly for several years, going out very little, studying much, and observing constantly the stars and the heavens by the help of instruments which he himself had made. Afterwards he became a clergyman, and was made canon of Frauenburg; and this, of course, gave him many duties to perform—duties which he never neglected; but he still managed to find leisure to carry on his observations and his studies.

Returns to  
Cracow.

It is in 1507, as I said, that he is supposed to have reached his great discovery in astronomy. During those years of study and observation, he had carefully noted the positions of the various heavenly bodies, and he gradually came to see that his observations did not fit in with the system of astronomy which had been believed in for centuries—with what is called the Ptolemaic system, from Ptolemy, the name of its founder. Ptolemy was an ancient astronomer of Hypatia's town, Alexandria, who lived about three centuries before her—in the second century A.C. According to him, the Earth which we live on was motionless and fixed, while the heavens moved round it in twenty-four hours. In this way he was able to account for the changes of night and day. But Copernicus saw that much that he had observed in the heavens could not be accounted for by this theory. For long he could not trust his own observations or even his own eyes. It seemed much easier to believe that he had somehow made a mistake, than that the theory which had been accepted by all the wise men who had lived during the last thirteen centuries could be wrong. But at last, after he had again and again

His great  
discovery.

made his observations with the greatest care and with the same results, he was forced to come to the conclusion that the Ptolemaic system was wrong.

But if the explanation of Ptolemy with regard to day and night, the seasons, and the other movements of the heavenly bodies was not correct, what was the true explanation? Copernicus pondered long over this question without reaching any answer; but one day there flashed into his mind all at once, like a sudden revelation, what Pythagoras had said, the old Greek philosopher who had lived twenty centuries before—seven centuries before Ptolemy, and more than five before Christ. What if old Pythagoras was right after all in what was with him only a guess? What if, instead of this Earth of ours being fixed, it was really in motion? what if it, as well as the other planets, were constantly moving round the Sun? Eagerly he turned to his observations, and found with breathless, awe-struck wonder that, with the help of the mere guess of that old Greek philosopher, he could explain everything that had been dark to him before.

You have been accustomed to think of this Earth you live on as moving; you have learned quite early at school that day and night are caused by the rotation of the Earth on its own axis, and the year by its revolution round the Sun; but I am sure you can imagine the wonder, the amazement, the awe that filled the mind of Copernicus when this discovery burst upon him; when he realized, what he alone of all the millions of human beings in the world knew, that the Earth, apparently so motionless beneath his feet, was really moving—moving more swiftly than the fleetest horse.

He did not at once make known what he had discovered. He studied and pondered and observed as before;

and the longer he pondered, and the more he observed, the more certain he became that with the help of Pythagoras he had reached the truth. He makes known his discovery. When he at last proclaimed his discovery, it was received as the project of Columbus had at first been received. Columbus, when he was trying to get the help of the king and queen of Spain for his proposed voyage, had been brought before a council of clergymen to be examined; and these good men had not only scoffed at and ridiculed his belief that the Earth was a globe, but had even declared that it was profane, as being contrary to the doctrine of the Bible, and they quoted texts to prove this. It was with equal ridicule, and with even louder accusations of profanity, that Copernicus was met by his fellow-men when he made public the conclusions which he had reached after so much patient thought and care.

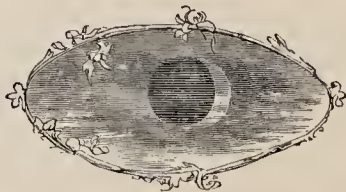
Fortunately, however, one or two learned men were convinced that his theory was right, and they urged him to expound it in a book. During the years His book. that he was writing this book, he suffered much from the ignorance and unkindness of his fellow-men, many of whom, though they were utterly ignorant of astronomy, thought they knew better than he, and looked with a kind of superstitious horror upon the man who had said that this solid Earth was in motion. He was an old man, worn out with work, anxiety, and pain, when at last the book was finished and conveyed safely to the printing-press at Nuremberg by a faithful friend. When it became known that the book was actually being printed, all the jealousy and ignorant superstition of his countrymen rose up in arms against him. He was denounced from the pulpit, and the people even attempted to break into the printing-works in order to



destroy the book. The printers worked at their types with a pistol lying ready at their side, and two faithful friends of Copernicus watched over the precious manuscript day and night.

Meantime Copernicus waited, in a state of the most intense excitement and anxiety, to receive the book completed from the hands of the printer. Every day he dreaded to hear that it had been destroyed, and that the work on which he had spent his life was lost. The excitement was too much for his weakened health: he broke a blood-vessel, and sank rapidly into utter feebleness and helplessness. Still, though he knew that death was near, he hoped that he might yet live to see the publication of his great work. He longed to have some proof before he died that the fruit of his years of thought and study should not be lost to mankind.

On the 23rd of May 1543 he was sinking rapidly. The shadows of death were stealing over him; a hushed silence reigned in the sick-room. Suddenly  
**His death,**  
**1543.** life flickered up into the dying face; a look of eagerness lit up the sunken eyes. A horse's footsteps are heard approaching nearer and nearer. Even before the door of his room is opened the dying man knows he has lived long enough—that his work is safe. Soon his wasted fingers grasp the volume he had longed to see. Then sinking back with a deep sigh, he faintly breathed his last prayer. "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace!"





## CHAPTER XI.

### LUTHER—THE REFORMATION.

AT the time when Copernicus was preparing to make public his great discovery, which was to bring about an entire reform in science, Luther had already begun in Germany a reform no less great—the reform of the church, of religion as it was taught and practised.

During the centuries that had passed since the fall of the western empire, Rome had gradually risen in power and increased in strength, till she had once more become supreme in Europe. All through what are called the Middle Ages, the Christian countries of Europe were governed by Rome —not from the throne of the emperor, as in the old days, but from the chair of the pope. It will appear strange to you that the bishop of Rome should have come to have such great power as to be able to rule great kingdoms simply by his word; but if you consider that he was regarded as the head of the church, and the representative on earth of Christ himself, you will be able to understand it better. In every Christian country of Europe, there were bishops and other clergymen who owed the position they occupied to the pope, and who were therefore regarded as in a special sense his subjects. These

The dominion of the Church of Rome.

The power of the pope.

men always kept the pope informed of everything of importance that went on in the countries where they were living; and if he disapproved of anything that took place in any country, he at once sent an order, or "bull," to the king of that country to put a stop to it. If the king ventured, as sometimes happened, to disobey

**Excommu-  
nication.**

the papal bull, he was excommunicated—that is, he was not allowed to enter a church, no clergyman was permitted to do anything for him, his subjects were not required to obey him, and, in short, he was looked upon as a sort of outcast from Christendom. No king, no man, could long endure such a state of things as this. After a short experience of being excommunicated, every one was found to be ready to do nearly everything the pope wanted. It was in this way that the power of the popes gradually became nearly boundless in Europe. Even if they had always been good men, such power was far too much for any one weak man to possess; but many of the popes were evil, wicked men, fond of pleasure and luxury, who did not shrink from any crime that might enable them to gain their object, so you can well understand that the supremacy of the pope of Rome was not a good thing for the countries of Europe.

If the popes were often wicked men, given up to pleasure and vice, so were many of the priests. In the monasteries, which were supposed to be quiet houses to which good men who loved learning could retire from the noisy world to study and meditate in peace, feasts and revels were sometimes held, and even great crimes were committed. Even before the time which we have now reached, good men had risen up and pointed out these evils, and tried to reform them. As early as 1155, a monk

**Attempted  
reforms  
before the  
Reformation.**

called Arnold of Brescia was put to death at Rome for trying to make some reforms in the church. In the fourteenth century, our English Wyclif, who translated the New Testament, spoke out loudly against many of the evil customs common among priests and clergymen, and even against some points in the doctrine which they taught. In the beginning of the fifteenth century, the two Bohemian Reformers, Huss and Jerome of Prague, who had taken up the views of Wyclif, were burnt to death and their ashes thrown into the river Rhine; and in 1498, when Luther was a boy at school, and Columbus was acting as viceroy in his newly-discovered country, the noble monk Savonarola, who had dared to denounce the evils which he saw going on in the church, suffered the death of a martyr at Florence, the city of the poet Dante. But the man who succeeded in bringing about the Reformation was Martin Luther.

Arnold of  
Brescia,  
1155.

Wyclif.

Huss and  
Jerome of  
Prague.

Savonarola.

Luther was born in 1483, ten years after Copernicus, at Eisleben, a small town in about the centre of Germany. His father was only a poor miner; but he was an intelligent man, with an interest in learning. What was very unusual for a man in his position at that time, he had learned to read and write, and he taught his son Martin, whom he seems to have intended from the very first to make a "scholar." When Martin was about six years old, he had learned all his father could teach him, and was then sent to school. As a boy, the future Reformer seems to have been bright and intelligent, with a strong will of his own, and a love of fun, and even of mischief.

Birth of  
Luther,  
1483.

In 1497, when he was not yet fourteen, his parents, who had several children to keep, could not afford any

longer to support him, so he was sent out into the world, with a bag on his back, to seek for more learning from the charity of strangers. Along

He goes to  
Magdeburg,

1497.

with another boy, he set out to walk to the town of Magdeburg, where there was a school for poor boys, kept by Franciscan monks. On the journey, Luther and his friend sometimes stopped at the houses they passed to beg for a piece of bread or a shelter for the night; and people were generally kind to the poor travelling scholars. At Magdeburg, and afterwards at Eisenach, where he went the following year, the poor boy had to endure the greatest hardship. In order to get food he was forced to go about the streets singing, and was thankful to accept a morsel of bread at a house-door. At last it became so difficult to get enough even to keep life in him, that he had almost made up his mind to give up his hopes of becoming a scholar, and to return home and win an honest livelihood with the spade,

Dame Cotta.

when a good woman of Eisenach, called Dame Cotta, took pity on him, and persuaded her husband to allow her to receive the boy into her house. There Luther lived for three years, during which he was treated with the greatest kindness, while he worked hard and diligently at his books.

In 1501 his father, who was now a little better off than he had been, was able, by great self-denial, to send

Luther goes  
to Erfurt,

1501.

his son to the university of Erfurt, where he took his degree of doctor in 1505. During the last two years he had fallen into a strange melancholy state of mind, caused partly by the sudden death of a friend who was struck down at his side by a flash of lightning, and partly by a severe illness which he himself had. He was troubled in mind by religious difficulties. Thoughts of the wickedness of mankind

and the justice of God haunted him so that he could not get rest night or day ; and at last in order to get peace of mind, he resolved, much to the disappointment of his father, to enter a monastery. He enters a monastery, 1505.

For the first two years after entering the monastery he lived a life of the hardest work and scantiest food. Being only a probationer, he was made to do the humblest tasks for the monks—to clean, to keep the door, to beg—and whatever spare time he had he spent in hard study. In 1507 he was ordained a priest, and the next year he was appointed professor at the university of Wittenberg. Becomes professor at Wittenberg, 1508. In this town he spent the greater part of the following years of his life, not only teaching in the university, but also preaching in the churches, and gaining a great power over the people by his wonderful eloquence and his learning.

It was in 1517 that an event happened which brought Luther forward as the upholder of the purity of Christ's gospel against the wicked practices of the Church of Rome. One of the worst customs Sale of indulgences. common in the church was the sale of "indulgences," or pardons. When the pope wanted to raise money for any purpose, he would send out messengers from Rome to all the different countries, to sell pardons to the foolish, ignorant people, who believed that by paying money to the pope they could be absolved from the sins they had committed, and be permitted to enter heaven when they died without passing through Purgatory. Our English poet Chaucer, who lived more than a century before Luther—about the same time as Wyclif—describes a "pardoner" who had come to England with his wallet

"Bretful of pardons come from Rome all hot,"



and tells us how this man could draw money out of the ignorant people. It was a man of this sort, a monk named Tetzel, who in 1517 came into Germany to collect money for the pope, by selling indulgences. The

Leo X. pope at that time was Leo X., a man who took great interest in learning and art, and who did a great deal to encourage both. At that time he wanted money to carry on the building of the magnificent cathedral of St. Peter's at Rome, and he resolved to raise it by a general sale of indulgences; so legates, or messengers, were sent into the different countries of Europe.

Luther was filled with burning indignation when he heard of this trading, this buying and selling in the church. He had studied his Bible carefully, and he knew well that it was not in the power of the pope, or of any other man, either to give or to sell pardon for sins. Indeed, I cannot help thinking that many other priests and learned men at that time must have understood this too; but they had not the courage, like Luther, to

Luther  
preaches  
against  
the sale of  
indulgences,  
1517. brave the enormous power of the pope. Luther boldly stood up in the pulpit of the city church of Wittenberg, and preached against the doctrine that men could buy with money pardon of sin; and he afterwards published

his sermon. When Tetzel attempted to make a reply, Luther nailed up on the door of the church ninety-five sentences against indulgences, which  
His  
ninety-five  
sentences. were quite unanswerable. These the people read as they went into church, and it helped to open their minds to the folly and sinfulness of attempting to buy pardon.

After this, Luther was summoned before Cardinal Cajetan, the legate of the pope at Augsburg, who tried

to make him recant—deny what he had said, in the pulpit and elsewhere, about indulgences. This Luther refused to do ; and he defended himself with so much learning and eloquence against all the arguments brought against him, that at last the patience of the cardinal was exhausted, and he ordered him angrily out of his presence.

Interview  
with  
Cajetan.

In 1520 the pope issued a bull of excommunication against Luther. Even this did not prevent the brave monk from preaching and declaring what he believed to be true. On the morning of the 11th December 1520, a strange scene took place at the eastern gate of the town of Wittenberg. A crowd of students and of robed professors of the university was gathered round a pile of blazing wood, beside which stood another professor, the monk Luther, his face pale and earnest, with a look of fixed determination upon it. Upon the pile he placed a number of books and papers ; and as these burned up, he turned to the group gathered round him, and holding in his hand a document on which they could see the papal seal, he spoke a few calm words. He declared that he knew the danger he was running in doing what he was about to do ; but that he could not draw back, he could not deny what he had already said and knew to be true. Then he dropped into the flames the papal bull. The light of that small bonfire shone over the whole of Europe, and lit up the darkness of ignorance in which men had been walking !

The papal  
bull, 1520.

Luther  
burns the  
pope's bull.

After this the pope issued a second bull against Luther ; and he was summoned by the emperor of Germany to appear before a diet, or council, assembled at Worms, a town in

Diet of  
Worms,  
1521.

the west of Germany, on the river Rhine. The emperor of Germany at that time, Charles V.,  
Charles V.ruled over the largest empire which had existed in Europe since the time of Charlemagne. His mother was Joanna, the daughter of Queen Isabella of Spain, the noble friend of Columbus; and through her Charles had got Spain, Naples, Sicily, and the New World which Columbus had discovered; while through his father he became heir to Austria and to a large part of the Low Countries. Two years before the diet of Worms, Charles had been elected emperor of Germany (for the title did not pass from father to son, but was given to some able and powerful prince, who was elected by seven princes and bishops of Germany). Francis I. of France and our own Henry VIII. of England were both candidates for the high position at the time it was given to Charles.

When the emperor's summons to Luther to appear before him at Worms arrived at Wittenberg, some of Luther's friends advised him not to obey it, even though the emperor had promised him a safe-conduct both in going to and coming from Worms. They reminded him how Huss, the Bohemian Reformer, had been granted a safe-conduct to Constance, and how, in spite of it, he had been put to death. Luther, however, was quite unmoved by all their arguments, and set out bravely to answer the summons. On his journey, the people everywhere showed the sympathy which they felt with the views of the great Reformer, and their admiration for his learning and courage, by the kindness with which they welcomed him. When he reached Worms, a great number of friends flocked out to meet him, and even then tried to persuade him to turn back. But he answered boldly and vehemently, "If there were as

many devils in Worms as there are tiles on the roofs of the houses, I would go on!"

The following day, the 17th of April, he appeared before the council, a solitary, black-robed monk, confronted by the emperor in all his state, attended by countless dignitaries in splendid robes or brilliant uniforms—bishops, and princes, and dukes, and barons innumerable. Quite unabashed by all the glitter and splendour before him, Luther stood firm, ready to meet whatever was before him. His books lay on a table at hand. The titles of them were read over to him, and he was asked if he acknowledged having written them. Respectfully, but in a firm voice, he answered that he did. He was then asked if he was willing to retract what he had written. To this he replied that the question was too serious to answer at once, and requested time to consider. He was allowed till the following day, when he was again brought before the diet, and again asked the question, Was he willing to retract what he had written in his books? This time he replied that whatever he had written he had written according to his conscience, and to the teaching of Scripture as he understood it; and that he could not retract anything in his books unless it was proved to him by Scripture that he was wrong. Thus this humble monk, the son of a poor miner, had the courage to stand up for truth against church and state and all the power and pomp of this world.

The emperor did not break his promise of a safe-conduct. Luther left Worms under the protection of an escort granted to him; but after the following twenty-one days he was to be regarded as an outlaw in the empire—that is, no one might give him food or shelter without being guilty of

Luther is  
outlawed.

treason. All good subjects of the empire were expected to watch for him, seize him, and bring him to trial; and his books were ordered to be burned. But Luther had a good friend in the elector of Saxony—the prince of that part of Germany in which Wittenberg is situated. This prince was not strong enough to protect Luther openly against the power of the emperor, but he chose a strange way of doing so privately.

**He is carried off to Wartburg.** On his journey back from Worms, the Reformer was suddenly attacked by two cavaliers with masks on, accompanied by several attendants. These men seized Luther, disguised him with a beard and a military uniform, and carried him off secretly to the castle of Wartburg.

Here he passed several months in safety, during which he began his translation of the Bible. But the brave, conscientious man was haunted by the thought that he ought not to be living in secret and in safety, but rather to be exposing his life in order to preach the truth; and at last, in March 1522, he left his safe retreat, and to the amazement of every one suddenly made his appearance again in his old pulpit at Wittenberg. After that he continued to preach, and crowds flocked to hear him.

**Returns to Wittenberg.** I cannot tell you here all the events that took place during the twenty-four years of life that still remained to him. In 1525 he married Catherine von Bora, who had been a nun, but who had left her convent and become a Protestant. In the Romish Church it was not considered right for a priest to marry; but Luther found nothing against it in the Bible. In 1534 he published his translation of the Bible, which helped people to see and to understand the truth of

**His marriage.**

**Translation of the Bible.**



the gospel for themselves, and increased the numbers of the Protestants. Five years before the publication of his translation of the Bible, the <sup>Protestants.</sup> name Protestant had been given to the followers of Luther in consequence of the "protest" which was presented by six Protestant princes at the diet of Speier against some proposals of the Roman Catholic party.

In 1546 the great Reformer died at Eisleben, the town of his birth, worn out by long years of hard work—writing and preaching and disputing. With him modern history may be said to begin: henceforward the state of the countries of Europe is quite different from what it had been before the reformation which he brought about. They are no longer under the dominion of the Church of Rome as they had been during the long centuries of the Middle Ages. A single brave monk had not only brought about a reform of the church, but had set free the nations of modern Europe from the yoke of Rome. Strangely enough, modern history begins with what the classical period ends—the fall of Rome, though in the one case it is an emperor, in the other a pope, who is conquered.



MARTIN LUTHER.

## Chronological Table of Events alluded to.

The Trojan War .....	B.C. 12th century
Birth of Homer .....	10th century
Foundation of Rome .....	753
Expulsion of the Tarquins .....	510
Birth of Sophocles .....	495
Battle of Marathon .....	490
Battle of Salamis .....	480
Birth of Socrates .....	469
Beginning of the Peloponnesian War .....	431
Death of Sophocles .....	405
End of the Peloponnesian War .....	404
Death of Socrates .....	399
Birth of Alexander the Great .....	356
Battle of Chæronea .....	338
Alexander sets out for Asia .....	334
Battle of Granicus .....	334
Battle of Issus .....	333
Founding of Alexandria .....	332
Death of Alexander .....	323
The Punic Wars begin .....	264
Battle of Cannæ .....	216
Birth of Cæsar .....	100
Birth of Virgil .....	70
Cæsar becomes consul .....	59
The Gallic Wars .....	58-49
First invasion of Britain .....	55
Battle of Pharsalia .....	48
Death of Cæsar .....	44
Battle of Philippi .....	42
Octavianus becomes emperor of Rome .....	31
Death of Virgil .....	19
Burning of Rome by Nero .....	A.D. 64
The Emperor Constantine proclaims liberty of worship to the Christians .....	313

Council of Nicæa .....	325
Founding of Constantinople.....	329
Division of the Roman empire.....	337
Death of Hypatia .....	415
Invasion of Britain by the Saxons .....	449
The last Roman emperor of the west deposed .....	476
Lombard conquest of Italy .....	568
Constantinople besieged by Arabs.....	668
Conquest of Spain by Arabs .....	711
Battle of Tours.....	732
Birth of Charlemagne .....	742
Charlemagne becomes king of the Franks .....	768
Conquest of the Lombards.....	774
Charlemagne crowned emperor at Rome .....	800
His death .....	814
Treaty of Verdun .....	843
Alfred the Great becomes king of England .....	871
Paris besieged by Northmen under Rollo.....	885
Cession of Normandy to Rollo .....	911
Birth of the Cid.....( <i>circa</i> ) 1030-40	
The Norman Conquest of England .....	1066
Conquest of Jerusalem by the Turks.....	1076
The First Crusade .....	1096
Death of the Cid.....	1099
Jerusalem taken by the Crusaders.....	1099
League of Lombardy.....	1167
Peace of Constance.....	1183
Jerusalem retaken by Mohammedans .....	1187
Richard I. becomes king of England.....	1189
He sets out on a crusade.....	1190
His death .....	1199
Magna Carta.....	1215
Birth of Dante .....	1265
Battle of Stirling.....	1297
Dante is exiled.....	1301
Execution of Wallace.....	1305
Bruce crowned king .....	1306
Battle of Bannockburn.....	1314
Battle of Morgarten.....	1315
Death of Dante .....	1321
Death of Bruce.....	1329
Battle of Crecy.....	1346
Battle of Poitiers .....	1356
Birth of Joan of Arc.....	1411
Battle of Agincourt .....	1415
Treaty of Troyes.....	1420
Joan of Arc raises the siege of Orleans.....	1429
She is burned to death.....	1431

Columbus born .....	1436
Invention of printing .....	1440
Constantinople taken by the Turks.....	1453
Birth of Copernicus.....	1473
Birth of Luther .....	1483
Final conquest of the Moors in Spain.....	1492
Discovery of America.....	1492
Savonarola put to death.....	1498
Columbus sets out on his last voyage.....	1502
He dies.....	1506
Copernicus reaches his scientific discovery.....	1507
Luther becomes professor at Wittenberg.....	1508
Beginning of the Reformation.....	1517
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Death of Copernicus .....	1543
Death of Luther .....	1546







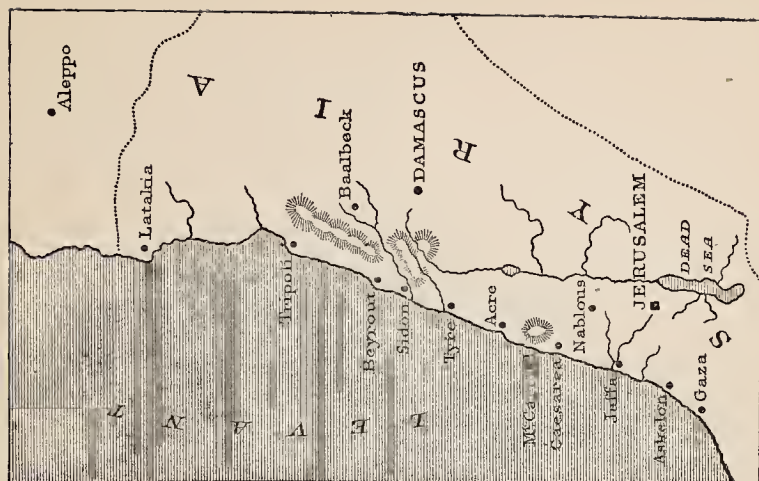
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### III.



THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

IV.



**PALESTINE.**

V.



EUROPE—FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES.



# VI.



THE EMPIRE OF CHARLEMAGNE.

# VII.



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VIII.



FRANCE—TENTH CENTURY.



IX.



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